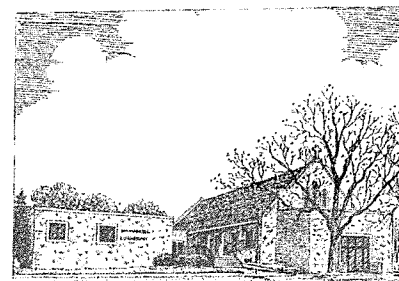
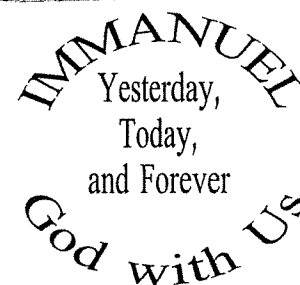


**IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

1024 Box Butte Avenue
Alliance, Nebraska
762-4663



Pastor: Rev. Richard C. Mueller
Pastor's email: doulos63@gmail.com
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2020

Newsletter Article

"Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered," (Psalm 105:1-5).

Merry Christmas and greetings to you in the name of our infant Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! How are our Christmas celebrations going to be different this year. Will we be able to gather together with family and friends? Will we have to stay home? We will have to wait and see, all because of the Covid pandemic we are facing. But does that mean that we lose the true meaning of Christmas? No. We still have Jesus in our lives who takes care of us. We may think at this time that we are so troubled and have lost everything, but have we? We still have many things that God has blessed our lives. We have Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Who would have ever known that the coming of a little baby into the world could make such a difference? How little we know the ways of God!

The amazing effect that an ordinary child can have on a

difficult situation is evidenced in the following story told by two Americans that were invited by the Russian Department of Education to teach in Russia:

It was nearing the holiday season, 1994, time for our orphans to hear, for the first time, the traditional story of Christmas. We told them about Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem. Finding no room in the inn, the couple went to a stable, where the baby Jesus was born and placed in a manger.

Throughout the story, the children and orphanage staff sat in amazement as they listened. Some sat on the edges of their stools, trying to grasp every word. Completing the story, we gave the children three small pieces of cardboard to make a crude manger. Each child was given a small paper square, cut from yellow napkins I had brought with me. No colored paper was available in the city. Following instructions, the children tore a worn-out nightgown an American lady

was throwing away as she left Russia, were used for the baby's blanket. A doll-like baby was cut from tan felt we had brought from the United States.

The orphans were busy assembling their manger as I walked among them to see if they needed any help. All went well until I got to one table where little Misha sat. He looked to be about 6 years old and had finished his project. As I looked at the little boy's manger, I was startled to see not one, but two babies in the manger. Quickly, I called for the translator to ask the lad why there were two babies in the manger. Crossing his arms in front of him and looking at this completed manger scene, the child began to repeat the story very seriously. For such a young boy, who had only heard the Christmas story once, he related the happenings accurately—until he came to the part where Mary put the baby Jesus in the manger. Then Misha started to ad-lib. He made up his own ending to the story as he said, “And when Maria laid the baby in the manger, Jesus looked at me and asked me if I had a place to stay. I told Him I have no Mamma and Pappa, so I don't have any place to stay. Then Jesus told me I could stay with Him. But I told Him I couldn't because I didn't have a gift to give Him like everybody else did. But I wanted to stay with Jesus so much, so I thought about what I had that maybe I could use for a gift. I thought maybe if I kept Him warm, that would be a good gift. So I asked Jesus, ‘If I keep You warm, will that be a good enough gift?’ And Jesus told me, ‘If you keep me warm, that will be the best gift anybody ever gave me.’ So I got into the manger, and then Jesus looked at me and He told me I could stay with Him — for always.”

As little Misha finished his story, his eyes brimmed full of tears that splashed down his little cheeks. Putting his hand over his face, his head dropped to the table and his shoulders shook as he sobbed and sobbed.

The little orphan had found someone who would never abandon nor abuse him, someone who would stay with him —
FOR ALWAYS.

When we are surrounded by so much in our lives it is easy to forget how special the account of the Lord's birth really is, and what peace it continues to bring to those who hear the story for the first time. Often times it is necessary for us to look outside our own lives to the lives of those who are not as fortunate as us, those who do not share the same privileges and freedoms we have in our country to learn that life is really not all about what you have in your life, but WHO you have in your life.

Take a few minutes every day this month to revisit the account of our Lord's birth with your family through devotions as you gather at the table for a meal. Talk about how fortunate we are as Americans to be able to live and to share our faith with one another. Then as the Scripture passage says, take advantage of the freedom you have and ...

“Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name; make known his deeds among the peoples! Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wondrous works! Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! Remember the wondrous works that he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,” (Psalm 105:1-5).

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we often pay more attention to the outward furnishings of life than we do to the wonderful blessings we have in Your family through Your Son Jesus Christ. Forgive us, and give us a sense of values that will measure up to eternity. Be with us once again this Advent and Christmas season as we approach the blessed manger of our infant Savior to hear the story of His birth. Help us also to proclaim that message so that those living through this Covid pandemic and in this troubled world will again be reminded of Your invitation of peace through the Christ Child. In His name we pray. Amen.

God Bless!
Pastor Mueller

ADVENT

The Advent season, the beginning of a new church year, begins on Sunday, November 29th, the First Sunday in Advent. The theme for the Mid-Week Advent Services is:

Await God's Future

Advent is the time of the church year that concentrates on the future tense. The overall theme of the series is "Await God's Future." It is God's future that we are yearning for based on what God himself has announced. God's future is our hope, not human-made futures, not human-concocted utopian dreams, not future visions depending on human technology, engineering, and science. The overall goal of the series is to enable people to hear some of the future-tense announcements of the ancient prophet Isaiah, so that these ancient words will instill in the hearts and minds of the listeners repentance, faith, and hope in the coming of Yahweh. Isaiah bids us: "Await God's Future."

Advent 1 (Dec. 2) – **Yahweh Will Save in Zion** (Isaiah 26-27)

Advent 2 (Dec. 9) – **The Day of Yahweh will Come** (Isaiah 13:9-13,19; 14:1)

Advent 3 (Dec. 16) – **Gentiles Will Belong to Ancient Israel's God** (Isaiah 19:23-25)

Advent 4 (Dec. 23) – **Death the Swallower Will Be Swallowed Up** (Isaiah 25:5-9; 26:19)

Christmas Eve – **O Give Thanks unto Yahweh** (Isaiah 12:4-6)

Christmas Day - **The Righteous King on David's Throne** (Isaiah 16:4-5)

You are encouraged to be a part of these services.

Stewardship Corner

Christmas is coming. It is a joyous time of feasting. The Church feasts upon the Word of God in sermon, song, and sacrament.

We hear the proclamation of the message of the angels: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). We mingle our voices with theirs as we sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" (Luke 2:14)! We receive the proclaimed Savior, Christ the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in manger but wrapped in bread and wine placed into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. We feast in great joy indeed because of this great blessing from our Lord and God.

God's people in ancient Israel also feasted with great joy. The Lord showered His abundant blessing on His people. And He commanded them to feast upon it (Deuteronomy 16). The people were to go to the place appointed, where the Lord would make His name dwell, and give offerings, each man as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord that He had given them (Deut. 16:10, 15, 17). And there the Lord would bless them with joy as they feasted upon what the Lord had provided. They ate of the choice

parts of their offerings. They enjoyed the company of all the people of God as they together heard His promises of blessing, sang of His bountiful goodness, and partook of what He gave.

We feast on the Word who became flesh to dwell among us, not just during Christmas but throughout all the year. We feast not just on the salvation He has wrought for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, but we feast also on all the temporal blessings that God gives out of His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament, but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends. Let us then, as did our brothers in the faith from ancient Israel, give as we are able, according to the blessing of the Lord our God that He has given us. Let us, like them, give generously of the first fruits of our income, which He gives, so that all may know and enjoy the salvation He gives and the joy we have in the Savior born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

Out of love and concern for others, the Martha group has made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Cookie Walk.

Look for it in 2021!

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also the the interests of others.

Philippians 2:4

GREETING CARDS: If you plan to send greeting cards for any occasion, please consider purchasing them from LWML. Our nice selection includes birthday for both adults and children, anniversary, wedding, get well, thinking of you, encouragement, congratulations, thank you and other cards to let someone know you're thinking of them. Featured cards during the month of November are Thank you for your service to military personnel. New Sympathy, Children's Birthday, and other cards will be arriving in November. Christmas cards will be placed in the vestibule later in the month.

ONGOING MISSION PROJECTS: Used bedding is needed by the quilters. Canceled postage stamps are needed for mission projects. Old eye glasses and outdated hearing aids are useful to others. Bedding may be left in the quilting room. Other items can be left in the cupboard under the guest book.



Sharon Tiensvold
Lue Nerland
Kenton Dietrich
Don Banks
Maxine Fox
Patty Seidler
Earl & Betty Bush

Larry & Mary Ring
JoElla Fritzler
Willetta Dye
Pierce Sanchez
Merlin Ring
Dean Tucker

Richard & Nel Furley	12/1	68 years
Dale & Betty Vaughn	12/10	59 years
Scott & Melanie Veach	12/10	23 years
Roger & Dorothy Schnell	12/14	30 years
Marlyn & Ellen Wilcox	12/16	48 years
Ron & Cindy Brown	12/27	40 years
Jack & Saundra Peterson	12/28	59 years
Tom & Tammy Lore	12/31	41 years



There is a sign up chart for Poinsettias in the Narthex if you would like to share a poinsettia for Christmas Eve to be placed on the wooden cross. Please have them to church by Christmas Eve noon! If any questions please call Bev Schnell 762 5445!

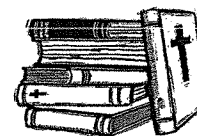
WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES. . .

Adult Bible Study - Sundays, 9 am Fellowship Hall.

Bible Break - Thursdays, 9:30 am, Fellowship Hall

MONTHLY LWML BIBLE STUDIES:

Lydia, Martha, and Tabitha will all resume Bible studies in January.



**Bible
Studies**

NOTES FROM THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE:

What is the Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund?

The Endowment Fund is a relatively new fund belonging to our congregation. Its purpose is “to receive gifts and bequests and to use them to further the mission and ministry of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church and School.” Creation of the Fund was approved by Immanuel’s voters late in 2015.

While the Endowment Fund belongs to the congregation, its assets are separate, distinct, and independent from the other funds and property of the congregation. Endowment assets cannot be loaned to the congregation or pledged as collateral for any loans of the congregation.

Why was the Endowment Fund created?

The opening of our Lutheran day school prompted our congregation’s leaders to consider establishing an endowment fund. Some congregations with long-standing endowments find them to be of substantial monetary assistance in funding their ongoing ministries.

Unlike our congregation’s operating funds (which are used for monthly expenses), the Endowment Fund has a long-term focus. In general, endowment funds are allowed to accumulate until they are able to produce meaningful income. This income is then disbursed periodically to support specific aspects of mission or ministry. The contributions that produced the income remain in the endowment fund to produce even more income in future years.

Endowment funds are often named in wills when the deceased wants to leave a legacy that will benefit others for many years to come. Other donors choose to make one-time or recurring donations during their lives, in addition to supporting the current operating needs of the congregation.

How is the Endowment Fund governed and managed?

On behalf of the voters of the congregation, the Church Council governs the Endowment Fund through an Endowment Committee. This five-member committee consists of the vice-president of the congregation, the treasurer of the congregation, two members appointed by the Church Council, and one member elected by the voters. The 2020 members of the Endowment Committee are Cindy Brown, Ron Mischnick, Joyce Borchert, Karen Kelly, and Harvey Schnell.

The Endowment Committee is tasked with adopting guidelines for the investment of assets and the expenditure of income from the Endowment Fund, maintaining accurate books, establishing policies, informing and educating the congregation, and otherwise administering the Fund.

What congregational missions and ministries does the Endowment Fund support?

The Endowment Fund has two restricted funds. The purpose of the first fund is to provide scholarships to students of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran School based on financial need. This fund will be allowed to grow to a \$100,000 principal balance before any income is distributed. As of October 31, 2020, this fund had a balance of \$81,069. **Only about \$19,000 is needed before distributions can begin!** Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could reach this milestone before the end of 2020?

The purpose of the second fund is to provide operating funds for our school. It exceeded a principal balance of \$100,000 in 2019, and an initial distribution of \$897 from earnings was made in January 2020. As of October 31, 2020, this fund had a balance of \$175,411.

How and where is the money invested?

Immanuel’s endowment funds are invested with the LCMS Foundation. This is the same organization that handles the investments of our synod and its synodical schools. The funds are professionally managed for a very low fee. Immanuel’s investment goal for the endowment is a balance of growth and income.

How would I contribute to the endowment?

Contributing to the Endowment Fund is like making any other contribution to Immanuel, and it has the same tax benefits. All that is needed is a designation for the Endowment Fund. No gift is too small to make a difference.

Please keep our congregation and all of its ministries in your prayers. If you have any questions about the Endowment Fund, please contact one of the committee members listed earlier.



Check out the artwork at church on the upper narthex doors this month from Ms. Alyssa Dye's third grade class!

Happy Birthday Baby Jesus! I know you've heard it a million times, but we are living in strange times! It seems that fear and anxiety are rampant these days as well as stress and uncertainty. There is however one thing that we can be certain of during these times. We have a God that loves us and promises to always be with us! He is bigger than all the issues that Satan cooks up in our world! He conquered all death for us! We need trust and believe in His power and promises.

We are so thankful that we have made it to December, and we are still in school. This is the best place for both the students and the teachers. This is where we find peace and calmness for our souls. Thank you for providing this place for us, but most importantly for these kids!

Veteran's Day Posters

During November, we spent a lot of time at school celebrating and honoring Veteran's for their brave service to our country. The entire school had a picture taken in the shape of a flag with information and pictures on the back as well. ALL monies from the sale of these pictures will be going to the Quilt of Valor program that provides handmade quilts for all Veterans as a way of saying "Welcome Home and Thank You for your service." Please help us support this program by purchasing one of these posters. They are 1 for \$15 or 2 for \$20 and would make an awesome gift! Please let Stephany or I know if you are interested in purchasing one or more.

Our school always looks forward to sharing the love of Jesus with the community through our Christmas Program each year. This year, however, we are unable to host this because of the restrictions associated with COVID. We are videotaping several songs from the children as well as a narration from scripture. We will make these available for the congregation to view. We so appreciate all of your prayers and support and we look forward to a more "normal" 2021. As always, feel free to call me at any time if you have questions concerning the school or its incredible staff! God Bless! Miss Jill

Kindergarten

Hello! Miss Horn report for kindergarten. We have been in school for 66 days. The kindergarten students have been working hard and are excited for Thanksgiving!

We have learned 43 phonograms so far. We are working on reading books, handwriting, spelling words, counting to 100 by ones and tens, counting pennies and dimes, telling time to the hour, and copying patterns! In religion, we are reading Bible stories focusing on important people like Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Esther, Elijah, Elisha, and Jonah. The students are working on memorizing the books of the Bible, the states, the presidents, and the continents!

Third Grade

Third grade is focusing on writing in cursive with the goal to start writing everything in cursive by the end of this semester. The third graders are excited about their postcard project, which is a special opportunity to practice writing in cursive and flexing their geography muscles. So far, we have sent/received postcards from over 7 countries and 15 states.

We have connected with third grade class in a school in Northern Ireland. We learned that 8-9 in this class are called Primary 5 instead of 3rd Grade. We would love to welcome you to follow our project on Facebook: Miss Dye's 3rd Grade Class Postcard Project. You can see what we are receiving in class and can find information about how to participate as well.

We are reading Charlotte's Web and picking up a plethora of new vocabulary words. This week, the third graders are creating comic strips of their favorite scenes of what we have read so far.

We have been busying working on our mixed media projects. Be on the lookout for our Christmas art projects in the narthex of the church in December!

Ms. Alyssa Dye

Hello From Mrs. Scherbarth's Classroom!

What have the 5th and 6th Graders been up to? By this time in the year, students are well adapted to all of our routines. In Religion class, students have been learning about King David. We read about David's encounter with Goliath, and students even got to create their own versions of a nine foot tall Goliath! At the end of the project, we had four impressive giants. We taped the one that students voted for right outside our classroom door. In science class, we have been learning about inventions related to transportation. Students have had the opportunity to build a bridge strong enough to hold a toy train, and gotten to design their dream car. Before long, our first semester will be in the books! Thank you again for your prayers for and support of our students!

God's blessings and a Merry Christmas to you all,

Mrs. Scherbarth

December Duty Roster

Ushers:

Saturday: Mr. Jason Seidler & Mr. Dirk Heilman-Seidler

Sunday: Mr. Chris Bartels & Mr. John Bartels

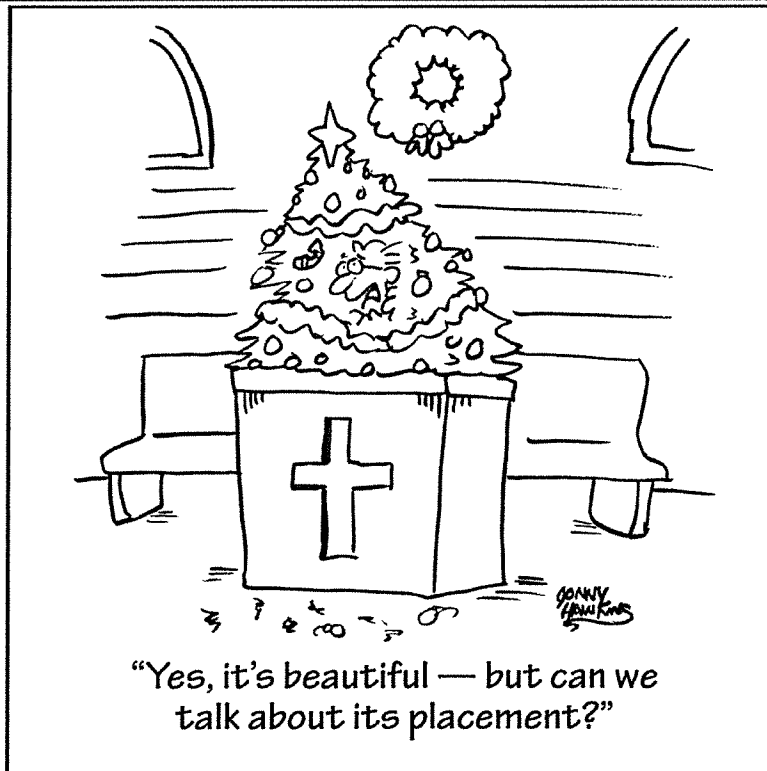
Elders:

Saturday: Mr. Tom DeVoogd

Sunday: Dr. R. Craig Dietrich

** Elder for Christmas Day: Dr. R. Craig Dietrich

Date	Acolytes	Coffee Duty	Counters
Wednesday Dec. 2 Saturday Dec. 5 Sunday Dec. 6 Wednesday Dec 9	Ayla Foster Zach Childers Jett Herian Josh Aguallo	Stephany Hausmann Becky Herian	December 7 th Karen Kelly
Saturday Dec. 12 Sunday Dec. 13 Wednesday Dec. 16	Rozlyn Wills Jett Herian Keera Stanec	Virginia Dennison Robyn Jensen	December 14 th Deb Grant
Saturday Dec. 19 Sunday Dec. 20 Wednesday Dec. 23 Christmas Eve 5:00 Christmas Eve 7:00 Christmas Day 9:00	Josh Aguallo Avenell Soriano Bany Stark Rozlyn Wills Jett Herian	Cindy Brown Tara Stanec	December 21 st Deb Moore
Saturday Dec. 26 Sunday Dec. 27	Paige Jensen Ayla Foster	Shirley DeVoogd	December 28 th Starla Endsley



Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church & School
Alliance, Nebraska
Treasurer's Report

	8/1/20 through 11/9/20		8/1/19 through 11/11/19		07/31/20
	BUDGET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	ACTUAL	TOTAL
General Fund Account--January 1		\$ 29,487.26		\$ 2,819.43	\$ 2,819.43
Receipts:					
Current Offerings		52,404.00		53,400.41	220,448.39
Mission Offerings		6,050.00		6,815.00	21,130.00
Other receipts		4,801.06		9,634.98	81,226.31
Total Accountable Funds		\$ 92,742.32		\$ 72,669.82	\$ 325,624.13
Disbursements:					
I. Board of Elders	\$ 185,787.00	\$ 27,411.16	\$ 155,957.00	\$ 45,291.86	\$ 170,661.30
II. Board of Parish Ed	11,300.00	465.80	11,300.00	543.31	3,199.85
III. Board of Missions:					
Missions	20,000.00	5,665.00	20,000.00	0.00	26,227.00
Other Mission Board	6,260.00	510.00	6,260.00	1,492.00	2,716.34
IV. Board of Trustees	73,197.00	13,724.97	70,197.00	14,682.46	50,714.72
V. Board of Stewardship	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	0.00	263.49
VI. Administration	18,500.00	3,283.68	18,500.00	3,987.93	13,377.80
Non-budget disbursements	0.00	9,540.00	0.00	5,271.52	15,215.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 316,544.00	\$ 60,600.61	\$ 283,714.00	\$ 71,269.08	\$ 282,375.50
General Fund Account Balance--		\$ 32,141.71		\$ 1,400.74	\$ 43,248.63
Less Accountable Funds		0.00		1,787.60	
Less Pending Checks		0.00		0.00	
Net Checkbook Balance		\$ 32,141.71		\$ (386.86)	
New School Fund--January 1		\$ 27,226.22		\$ 163.49	\$ 163.49
Receipts		205,382.07		191,934.34	607,687.30
Disbursements		(176,980.13)		(194,635.13)	(581,674.57)
School Operations funds		\$ 55,628.16		\$ (2,537.30)	\$ 26,176.22
Raising Disciples Campaign Offerings		\$ 0.00		\$ 300.00	\$ 1,050.00
Raising Disciples Offerings Disbursed		0.00		0.00	0.00
Raising Disciples funds		\$ 0.00		\$ 300.00	\$ 1,050.00
New School Fund Account Balance--		\$ 55,628.16		\$ (2,237.30)	\$ 27,226.22
Less Raising Disciples funds to be disbursed		0.00		1,920.00	
Less Pending Checks		0.00		2,916.61	
Net Checkbook Balance		\$ 55,628.16		\$ (7,073.91)	
School Building Payment Account--January 1		\$ 48,479.41		\$ 71,946.47	\$ 71,946.47
Receipts		49,026.02		174.63	540.19
Disbursements		(8,000.00)		(8,000.00)	(24,007.25)
School Building Payment Account--		\$ 89,505.43		\$ 64,121.10	\$ 48,479.41
Building Fund--January 1		\$ 13,851.71		\$ 15,935.54	
Receipts		2,321.05		836.17	
Disbursements		(14,415.63)		(4,400.00)	
Building Fund--		\$ 1,757.13		\$ 12,371.71	
Memorial Fund Bank Account		\$ 17,185.52		\$ 16,458.00	
Endowment Fund		\$ 259,666.09		\$ 141,945.31	
Debts Owed					
Internal debt (Net checkbook balance - General Fund)		\$ 0.00		\$ 386.86	
District/Synod Support owed		385.00		6,815.00	
Internal debt (Net checkbook balance - School Fund)		0.00		7,073.91	
District/Synod Support owed prior year		0.00		5,097.00	
Owed to Special Funds Account		0.00		43,400.00	
First National Bank - Operating loan		0.00		8,577.41	
First National Bank - PPP loan (thru SBA)		117,649.00		0.00	
Ralph Hoxworth - Skateland Building (School)		38,000.00		62,000.00	
Total debt		\$ 156,034.00		\$ 133,350.18	