

ITEMS



Volume 62 No. 04

April 2020



All Church Services, Preschool Classes, Meetings & Events are suspended until further notice.

Please check immanuelmokena.org for updates, to view our current Worship schedule & to view Pastor's Daily Video Blog Messages, Midweek & Weekend Services.

Questions? Call 708-479-5600

Worship Continues With Creative Solutions *by Sarah Bechtel*



As Immanuel and other churches have been forced to cancel services, Pastor Schellhas looked for ways to keep us connected and in the Word. He found the solution with a combination of "home videos" – first creating a daily vlog (video log) that is posted on Facebook, YouTube, and our website.

Next was a mid-week Lenten service for March 18th he created by recording a message and also adding music performed by the Schellhas family.

A weekend worship service was a bigger challenge. Pastor enlisted the help of Immanuel members, and the result was a wonderfully inspiring service for March 21st and 22nd we could

watch in our homes and still feel connected to our fellow members. The weekend service consisted of liturgy and message by Pastor, music by the Schellhas family, and readings and prayers by members. What a beautiful combination!

If you have missed any of these vlogs or services, you can find them in multiple places:

- www.immanuelmokena.org – Go to Connect, Select Faith@Home
- Facebook – Follow us @ImmanuelMokena
- YouTube – Our channel is Immanuel Lutheran Mokena (you can subscribe to the channel to be notified when new videos are posted)

Thank you to Pastor, the Schellhas family, and the many members who have contributed to these videos.

Until we can again worship together physically, please take advantage of these resources to nourish your faith during this difficult time. ([See page 4 for Special Holy Week Schedule](#))

SERVING THE LIVING LORD AT IMMANUEL

Mission Statement: "Caring and sharing since 1850, the mission of the family of God at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mokena is to effectively teach the Word of God, promote the spiritual growth of the Christian family, and continuously reach out with love and service."

Connecting people in loving relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, with each other in contagious Christian community, and with our calling of servanthood in the world.

Financial Summary

YOY Comparison	FEB 2020	2020 YTD	2019 YTD	YOY Change	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Offering	28,091	51,734	49,393	2,341	5
Interest	73	155	232	-77	-33
Facility	200	1,400	800	600	75
Expense	30,336	65,144	61,717	3,427	6
Balance	-1,973	-11,144	-11,292	-562	5

All Church Services, Preschool, Activities and Events are Suspended Until At Least April 30. Please continue to check our website, facebook page and your email for updates on this closure.

April Worship Schedule

All services will be online for the month of April

To access the videos:

Go to www.immanuelmokena.org

Click "Connect"

Select "Faith@Home"

To find our Current Worship Schedule

Go to www.immanuelmokena.org

Click "I'm New"

Select "Worship Services"

If you would like to assist Pastor with components of the services, please contact him at aaron@immanuelmokena.org

Bulletin & Items Publishing

Bulletin articles are due on Wednesdays by 9 a.m.

Articles for the April *Items* are due by **April 24** and will be on our website, emailed, mailed, and in the lobby after **May 1**. The *Items* Newsletter is also available online at immanuelmokena.org

*** Please consider signing up in the lobby or on our website to receive the newsletter via email.**

Elders

Immanuel has elders who assist the pastor during the worship service and outside of worship. Their job is to be of service to you in any cares/concerns you may have with the congregation and within your family. Here are your elders:

Elder 1: Marty Olsen 815-464-4373

Elder 2: Jim Bubeck 312-952-1727

Elder 3: Bruce Bechtel 815-485-5455

Elder 4: Nick Whittier 815-485-9269

Elder 5: Jerry Vrshek 815-469-5059 (Director)

Please contact these Elders should you have any needs/concerns/questions.



Have you moved or has your contact

information changed recently?

If the answer is yes, please call or email the church office with your new information so you don't miss out on our communications for church events/info!

Church Office Contact Information:

708-479-5600 | office@immanuelmokena.org

AVAILABLE FOR NON-CONTACT ASSISTANCE
VIA PHONE AND EMAIL UNTIL APRIL 30

Donations To Special Groups

Please follow the below instructions for submitting donations via check to any of the following groups.

GROUP

Rays of HOPE

God's Kids Club

Ruth Society

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE

Rays Of Hope

Immanuel Lutheran

Include on Memo: God's Kids Club

Ruth Society

** For Special Group Donations: Clearly write on the outside of your offering envelope where the funds should be designated.*



CONVERSATION STARTERS FROM THE PASTOR

Adaptive Immigrants

I don't think I'm understating the point that American life has had to adopt a great number of adaptations in the past

couple of weeks. A disease as quickly-spreading as COVID-19 has put a halt to many practices and patterns that we often take for granted. While going to see family and friends used to be a harmless and welcome activity, it comes now with an added layer of risk and concern. If you've been paying attention to the world from whatever view you have, it's pretty clear that people are still trying to be relationally present with one another, and sometimes in ways they didn't used to be.

The truth is that God created us to be relational creatures, to have relationships both with Him and with one another. And while we all have different levels of interest in social interaction, it's pretty hard to function as a human without other people. We need one another. If that means we have to adapt to survive, not just to provide for our spiritual needs but also our mental, emotional, and spiritual ones, we'll do what we need to do.

God made us to be adaptable creatures. Scripture has some beautiful examples of this. Consider the children of Israel and their journey from Caanan (while Jacob was still alive) to Egypt to the Exodus to the wilderness wanderings to the Promised Land. This entailed a high level of adaptation to circumstances, and it wasn't always pleasant. But God was faithful. He sustained and delivered His people.

And how about the Early Church? Gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost, the followers of Jesus exploded in numbers in the wake of the Spirit falling on the disciples. But not too long after, that great gathering of Jesus-followers were persecuted right out of a place of sweetness, family, and connection. God pushed them into new places, and wherever they went (Judea, Samaria, the ends of the Earth - Acts 1:8) the great good news of Jesus' death and resurrection power went with them. Even the words they used had to adapt to linguistic and cultural barriers, and that work continues even to this day through the work of groups like Lutheran Bible Translators.

Now, we must be careful not to allow ourselves to lose our "saltiness" and "lightness." Jesus warns us of this in Matthew 5:13-16 in

the Sermon on the Mount. If salt has no taste, it has no worth. A light covered by a bowl loses its ability to affect the surrounding space with illumination. So we should not adapt to every whim of culture...far from it! We should stand out in the way that we cling to the timeless truths of God's Word that cross cultural and geographic boundaries. Sin is sin. We shouldn't accept every cultural idea that flies in the face of what God says. But at the same time, how we express that truth will communicate to those around us if the love of God is truly a part of who we are. Ask anyone who's been blinded by a bright bathroom light after just waking up, or a person who's been served a savory dish that amounts to not much more than a salt lick what they think of light or salt in excess, and I guarantee you'll get a negative reaction.

Immigrants have to be adaptable. The best definition of an immigrant that I've been able to formulate for myself is "a group of people on a journey, looking for a home." Now, stripping away all of the cultural and legal commentary we have about the nature of immigration in our country, I think this idea has much to tell us about where we're going as a church. Like the children of Israel in the desert, we're on a journey. Like the Christian families in Jerusalem who fled the persecution there with the few meager things they could carry in order to find a new life in a place where the Gospel could thrive, we're in search of a home. And even when we do discover the sweetness of something that looks and feels like our best idea of "home" in this life, it's still not perfect. It still lacks...something. Even when we tweak our surroundings to within an iota of perfection, it's never going to be quite right. The fact is, we will never find our true Home until our journey of this life ends with a joyous homecoming into the Household of our Father, the King. Only in His presence will be truly, completely, and finally HOME.

So, the journey continues! We're not home yet...but our Father has given us a beacon to follow in the imitable example of His Son, Jesus. His Spirit leads and guides us from the inside, making us long for our final rest in the halls of our Father, and pushing us to keep moving, keep immigrating, keep seeking the Kingdom even now. Will we have to adapt to continue this missional journey? Absolutely! Is God teaching us what it means to be the Church, scattered? I think so, even though we long for the sweetness of being together. Is He training us to be faithful in our Table spaces as

much as our Temple spaces, and reminding us that we are temples ourselves of His Spirit? He is! Is this temporary hardship a catalyst for growth in the aftermath? I fully trust God's plan to use this for His glory and our good, using us to be salt and light in new and unexpected ways.

For now, I pray you are well, that God continues to provide for all of your needs, and that you still have opportunities to love people like Jesus. Even though you're probably stuck in one spot for the foreseeable future, don't forget...

Adventure is out there!

Pastor Aaron

Upcoming Online Worship Schedule for Holy Week

View online worship at immanuelmokena.org click Connect and select Faith@Home to view. Services will be available after 5:30pm on each scheduled date.

April 01 - Mid-week Lenten Worship

April 05 - Palm Sunday

April 06 - Holy Week Monday

April 07 - Holy Week Tuesday

April 08 - Holy Week Wednesday

April 09 - Maundy Thursday

April 10 - Good Friday

April 11 - Holy Saturday

April 12 - Easter Sunday



Spring Food Drive (Revised Edition)

by Sarah Bechtel

The Board of Stewardship had planned to collect non-perishable items for the Frankfort Township Food Pantry in March. With the unexpected interruption to those plans, we are encouraging members to still support your local food pantry.

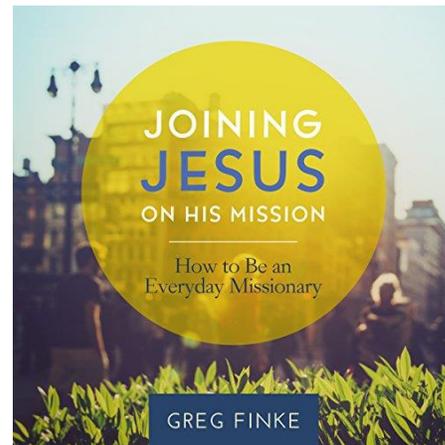
The Frankfort Township Food Pantry has placed a shopping cart outside so that donors can simply drive by and drop off donations without coming into the building. The food pantry is located on the lower level of the Frankfort Township building at 11000 W. Lincoln Highway.

The New Lenox Township Food Pantry is accepting financial donations via their website. Visit newlenox.org and look for the Food Pantry Donate button on the left side of the home page.

With the huge increase in unemployment, more and more people will be relying on community resources – we thank you for any assistance you can provide.

Joining Jesus Study - It's Not to Late!

by Sarah Bechtel



Small groups were formed back in February for the study of the book, *Joining Jesus*. The small group study also includes videos to assist in understanding and discussing the points

made in each chapter. Since the small groups are no longer able to meet in person, Pastor received permission to add the videos to the Immanuel website. However, the videos can only be accessed if you are logged into the website. (See the Keep in Touch article for details on logging in.) You may find yourself at home with your very own small group. Evening activities have been cancelled, college students have returned home, etc. It isn't too late to start your own study of this book! The office still has several copies of *Joining Jesus* available – the books are \$12 each. Contact the office if you would like to purchase one and a "contactless" transfer will be arranged. Once you have a website login, you will also be able to access the videos. You will find them under the Connect menu.

Serving St. Matthew's Soup Kitchen



On each of our visits, we are humbled and thankful for God's blessings on this ministry.

Our next visit will be determined based on the

affects of Covid-19. Everyone is invited to join us – we leave Immanuel about 10:45am and are back to Mokena by 2:00pm – please **call Barb at 708.995.5375 if you are interested in joining us.**

2020 Serving Dates: 4/9; 5/14; 6/11; 7/9; 8/13; 9/10; 10/8; 11/12; 12/10



Lutheran Women's Missionary League

Though we are not meeting in person we encourage you to continue using your mite box offering boxes. Your mite box offerings are helping to fund ten mission grants selected at the LWML NID convention. To view these grants visit our website, select Serve, and click World. Help yourself to a mite box – your whole family is invited to participate. Thank you for supporting our Northern Illinois District and National LWML mission grants – you are a blessing to so many!!! Mite offerings are collected on the first weekend of the month in the large mite box in our narthex.

Next Mite Box Collection Tentatively: May 2/3

Thank you for supporting LWML – your gifts are a blessing to many!

Keep in Touch *by Sarah Bechtel*



As we "stay at home" you are certainly wondering how other members of the Immanuel family are

doing. Did you know you can find contact information for Immanuel members on our website?

BUT, you have to be logged into the website in order to see the Member Directory. (That way member information is not available to the public.) Do you have a website login? If you wish to access this directory but do not have a login – email the church office and request a login. Send your request to office@immanuelmokena.org.

Once you are able to log into the website, you will find the member directory under the Connect menu.

Also, you can keep your own information up to date via the website. When you are logged into the website, go to Connect, Members and find your listing. Click on your name and you will have the option to edit your profile. You can update your address, phone numbers, and email address. Any changes will automatically be made to the member information database maintained by the church office.



Limanowski Greenhouse Brings New Life in Mokena *by Lyn Thorne*

Thanks to the Limanowski Family for sharing their greenhouse updates. It is so nice to see the brilliant colors that are already in progress. Fortunately for us, their greenhouse opens for us on May 1st. If you have never been there, you will want to go. They live right on 187th St in Mokena. Their address is 9909 187th St but it is somewhat hard to find. From 104th St. you will turn east and go all the way down until the road almost ends and you will see a driveway with a "Honey for Sale" sign. Turn in there and drive back to the greenhouse.

Lifting the Community Up!

by Nicolette Fitzpatrick

Lyn Krohse Thorne ► Mokena Moms ...

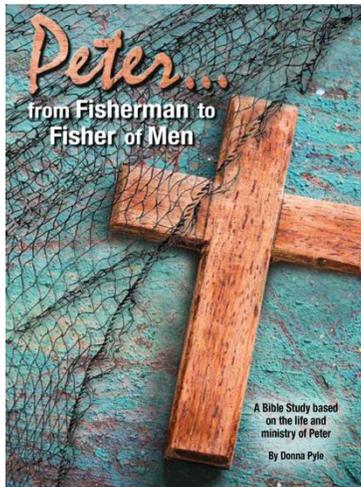
Immanuel Lutheran had a large stockpile of lessons and craft kits left over so we have put 72 goodie bags together to give your kids some projects to work on. They are free and in a bin outside our office door at 10731 W LaPorte Rd. Please only take what you need and please do not break up the kits. We hope you find them helpful.



Lyn Thorne came up with a solution for help local parents to help their children get used to this new normal of being cooped up at home. She found a hodge podge of leftover crafts and Sunday School lessons and put together 72 goodie bags. Lyn took to social media telling parents to come and pick up a few as many as they needed from a tote outside of the church office entrance.

Is there something that your family or friends are doing in the community that you would like to share? Send an email message and photo to office@immanuelmokena.org so we can share your story in next month's newsletter!

Peter...From Fisherman to Fisher



of Men

by Barb Belanski

The Thursday morning Women's Bible study recently completed "Overflowing Abundance – a Bible Study on Jesus Feeding the Five Thousand". We fell in love with Donna Pyle, the author of the DVD study and her down-to-earth

style which encouraged us to dig into Scripture with enthusiasm and expectation. It is with the same vigor that we look forward to our next DVD study based on the life and ministry of Peter: "Peter...from Fisherman to Fisher of Men." Donna Pyle has written the study to impact our spiritual walk and to grow our faith by sharing how God used the Gospel to reveal Peter's brokenness, failures, struggles, and triumphs. He is very relatable!! He made huge mistakes but remained open to listen, learn, lean in, and love in new and challenging ways.

Our study will seek to answer the following questions:

- Where did Peter come from?
- What did Peter's life look like before Jesus entered the scene?
- How did Peter become one of Jesus' inner circle among the twelve disciples?
- What was his calling given by Jesus?
- What were Peter's strengths and weaknesses as a disciple?
- What was Peter inspired to teach and write that applies to our Christian walk today?

Sound interesting? As soon as we're able to meet again, you are invited to join us!! We meet on the second and fourth Thursday of the month at 9:15 a.m. Looking forward studying with you and SEEING you again SOON!!!

Unburdening

Pastor Aaron will make himself available for unburdening sessions Monday through Wednesday mornings during Holy Week. Appointments are encouraged, please call the church office at 708-479-5600 x2 to schedule.

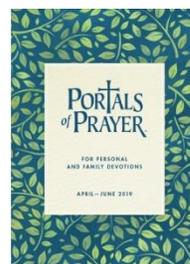
Heard the Word Zoom Lately?



Zoom, Zoom, Zoom....that word is everywhere! Whether you're working from home, gathering virtually with one of our Bible Study groups, or our Small Groups, **Zoom.us** has become a popular way to communicate with

each other because of its ease of use.

If you are attempting to quickly teach yourself how to use the software, last week Zoom created some helpful instructional videos that you can view at support.zoom.us



Portals of Prayer

The April - June 2020 edition of Portals of Prayer is now available for contact free pick-up. There is a clear tote located to the left of the Church office entrance for your convenience. Large print copies have been mailed to our shut-in members. Please pick yours up today.

Consider Supporting Our Church

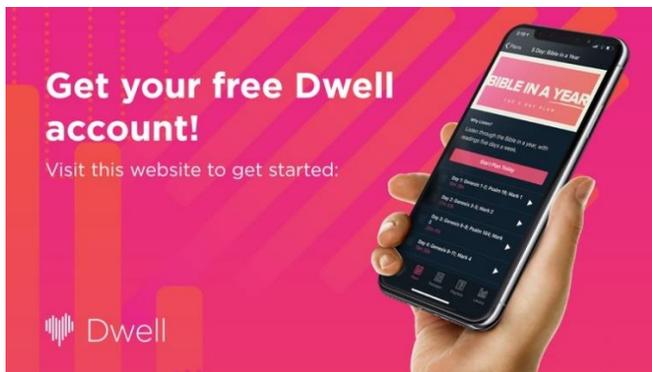


Please continue to financially support our church, there are operating costs we have to maintain even during closure.

Though any way you donate is greatly

appreciated, please consider giving online, it's safe easy and contact free,

at immanuelmokena.org (Click Giving Tab & Select [Electronic Giving](#) or [Mobile Giving](#)). You can also mail donations to 10731 W LaPorte Rd, Mokena, IL 60448 or drop them in the black secure lockbox right by the church office entrance (*checked daily*).



Get Your Free Dwell Account

by Pastor Aaron

Immerse yourself in scripture by signing up for a free 60 day subscription for Dwell, an audio Scripture app. It's free to our congregation, and you can get it by signing up with this link:

<https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/HU3X9P>



Christian Symbol: Nails

Nails symbolize Jesus' passion and suffering because they were used at his Crucifixion. They are often depicted in groups of three because two nails were used to secure Jesus' hands, and a third was used to secure his feet. Three nails are also used to identify Jesus as a member of the Holy Trinity.

APRIL

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Barb LaRocco - Apr 1
 Giovanni Fitzpatrick - Apr 2
 Patrick Lydic - Apr 2
 Jessica Malley - Apr 2
 Jim Bubeck - Apr 3
 Amy Greenspan Apr 3
 Kimberly Perrin - Apr 4
 Virginia Miller - Apr 5
 Sarah Smith - Apr 5
 Edith Albers - Apr 6
 Bruce Bechtel - Apr 6
 Hayley Grebic - Apr 6
 Kalie DeVivo - Apr 7
 Lauren Smith - Apr 7
 Peyton Hohl - Apr 8
 Maddie Roberts - Apr 8
 Heather Dangman - Apr 9
 Steven Lindee - Apr 9
 Nick Whittier Jr - Apr 10
 Patty Lipscomb - Apr 11
 Lisa Baker - Apr 17
 Linda Jeffrey - Apr 17
 Jessie Nykrin - Apr 17
 Laurie Fuka - Apr 19
 William Rohder Jr - Apr 20
 Solomon Fargo - Apr 21
 Tim Malm - Apr 21
 Corey Diab - Apr 24
 Karen Everett - Apr 24
 Marsha Flesch - Apr 28
 Rebecca Keen - Apr 30
 Phyllis Seno - Apr 30

Anniversaries

04	Nancy & Pat Eble	33 years
04	Marty & Sue Olsen	33 years
04	Kimberly & Mike Perrin	28 years
17	Emma & Karl Wohler	38 years
20	Laura & Ted Fenn	29 years
24	Cathy & Marcel Arenz	33 years
24	Lisa & Tim Baker	35 years
25	Linda & Ray Steinbrenner	34 years
28	Delynn & Tom Flannery	08 years
28	Janie & Craig Nass	31 years

We wish God's blessings on all these people celebrating a birthday or anniversary. If we have forgotten anyone's special day or it is in error, please contact the church office.



Sunday Morning at 8:00 AM on Chicago's CW station WPWR channel 50 (Comcast 184)

Tel: (260) 471-LOVE (5683) | Toll-Free: (888) 286-8002

www.worshipanew.org (Sermon Summaries)

Email: info@LMMinc.org

Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc. 5 Martin Luther Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996
Chicago and Northwest Indiana

April 5, 2020 – Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion

Psalm 118:19-29; **John 12:12-19; Matthew 27:11-66**

“Palms to Passion” - Sermon Text: Philippians 2:8b - Rev. Shayne Jonker

Holy Week begins on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. Jesus procures a donkey and His disciples hail Him with palm branches. They make a royal highway for Him with their coats and shout, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” The mood, however, shifts quickly from palms to passion, from triumph to crucifixion. This is no ordinary King. He dies for His people and kingdom. Never has the world seen such a King as this one.

April 12, 2020 – The Resurrection of Our Lord/Easter Day

Psalm 16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11; John 20:1-18

“Tears of Joy” - Sermon Text: John 20:1-18 - Rev. Paul Shoemaker

When a military mother is unexpectedly greeted by her child returning from deployment, the shock is overwhelming, and she may burst into tears of joy. Mary's tears of sorrow changed into tears of joy when she saw the risen Savior.

April 19, 2020 – Second Sunday of Easter

Psalm 148; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

“A Genuinely Tested Faith” - Sermon Text: 1 Peter 1:3-9 - Rev. William Mueller

The Apostle Peter reminds us that our faith in Jesus Christ is a genuinely tested faith. This means that through the struggles, various trials, and other griefs that we endure, God is drawing us closer to Jesus. Our faith in Jesus may be tested, but it is genuine!

April 26, 2020 – Third Sunday of Easter

Psalm 116:1-14; 1 Peter 1:17-25; Luke 24:13-35

“Have It GOD'S Way!” - Sermon Text: Luke 24:13-35 - Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

Does God's gift of faith come from a set menu, or is it served up à la carte? In what ways are we “slow of heart” to believe all that God's Word tells us? In His conversation with two Emmaus-bound disciples, the risen Lord Jesus Christ reveals the challenges and possibilities of a faith humbly determined to *Have It GOD'S Way!*