

ITEMS

A newsletter for the family and friends of Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church



Volume 63 No. 7

July 2021

VOTERS MEETING

Voters meeting will be held Sunday, July 11 after the 9 a.m. church service. The principal item of discussion will be the hiring of Tracy Miranda to be our new Preschool Director. We will also have updates on projects like the Mortgage Payoff Funding. The meeting will be outdoors, weather permitting.



JULY MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

By Sarah Bechtel

Our missionary of the month for July will be Rev. Dr. Jonathan Naumann and his wife, Deaconess Cheryl Naumann – they serve through LCMS and are based in the Dominican Republic. Jonathan is the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regional chaplain and provides pastoral care to LCMS missionaries and their families in over ten countries. He also teaches future Latin American pastors at the LCMS seminaries in this region. See page 4 for more details.

OUTDOOR FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

By Lyn Thorne

Join us July 23rd at 7:30 pm for a fun, baseball themed evening as we watch the classic movie, Field of Dreams. Come dressed in your favorite team's sportswear. Soft drinks, hot dogs, and popcorn will be served. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex, so we can get approximate number for food and beverages.



OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Outdoor worship will be on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 9 am, weather permitting. July dates are July 11 & 25. Bring your lawn chairs. Masks do not need to be worn outdoors. We will need some help to set-up each Sunday, starting at 8 am. Please contact Jerry Vrshek on his cell (815)953-8153 to volunteer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL & PRESCHOOL RETIREMENT & FAREWELL GATHERING

Please take the opportunity to stop by the church on Saturday, July 24, 3:00-4:30 wish all the best to Tina Beugger, retiring after 25 years of teaching at our Immanuel Preschool, Linda Marquardt, who is stepping down as Preschool Director, and Bev Whitter, retiring from teaching Sunday School at Immanuel after 40 years of service. We thank God that we have had the pleasure of working with these wonderfully talented individuals and wish them God's blessings in all their future endeavors.



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	MAY 2021	2021 YTD	2020 YTD	YOY Change	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Offering	23,397	131,187	130,425	762	1
Interest	17	594	857	-263	-31
Facility	325	775	1,650	-875	-53
Expense	23,943	130,560	146,347	-15,787	-11
Balance	-204	1,996	-13,415	15,411	147

> Mortgage Balance \$170,799

IN-PERSON SERVICES CONTINUE Contemporary Saturdays at 5:00 pm Traditional Sundays at 9:00 am

We have limited congregational responses and singing during worship to help keep the spread of germs to a minimum. The praise band and organist will still perform in a limited capacity.

ARE YOU IN NEED OF FINANCIAL, PASTORAL OR OFFICE SUPPORT?

Please Contact Us:

Pastoral Support: 708-479-5600 x2

Office Support: 708-479-5600 x1

Live-Streamed Weekly Worship

Tune in to Facebook, YouTube Channel or immanuelmokena.org (click connect, live stream) to view the services live from the comfort of your home. Service times are listed above.

Bulletin & Items Publishing

Bulletin articles are due on Wednesdays by 9 a.m. Articles for the August *Items* are due by **July 26** and will be on our website, emailed, and mailed after **August 1st**. The *Items* Newsletter is also available online at immanuelmokena.org

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

Official Acts

Wedding – June 26, 2021:
Phil & Ashley Steffen



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)

Elder 6: Lynn Gilmore 815-600-6855

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

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

Include on Memo: God's Kids Club

Ruth Society

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE

Rays Of Hope

Immanuel Lutheran

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

God's Message: Rest

I heard from God the other day. No, I'm not talking about an audible manifestation of His Words. It wasn't a loud, mighty voice from heaven or a soft whisper. Nor did an angel appear to me. Nothing so dramatic as that. But I heard something that I had heard from God before, put in a new way, and it spoke to me in a new way, nudging my heart closer to God's.

What do you do when you hear a word from God? If Scripture (and hopefully personal experience) is a good indication, then you perk up. You listen. And when God tells you to do something, you step out in faith. You don't merely examine the "ladder" of God's directions to you. You trust that what He says is true and you step up on that ladder in faith. Faith implies action; faith without works is dead, James tells us (2:26). Put another way, God doesn't want a lifeless Body, but He wants His Body, the Church, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus living in us individually and collectively. The Spirit that moves us into action, bringing the Kingdom where He sends us everyday.

I wouldn't be at all surprised if your next question was something like, "How do I know when God is speaking to me? How can I make sure it really is a message from Him, and not something else?" The answer is a question: "Have you heard God say this in Scripture?" Has God communicated this to you in the past, in a place that God's people believe to be authoritative? Does that Bible say this, as God's own Word? Is what you hear Him saying to you now match up with that clearly-expressed Word?

Lots of very personal questions here, I know, and ones that often require some focused reading of Scripture and deep reflection to properly answer. It also requires a knowledge of what God has said in the past, so we know what the truth is. Jesus said that knowing the truth sets us free (John 8:32). Part of embracing that freedom is knowing God's Word well enough to know the truth of Who God is and who He calls us to be and to do. With that knowledge as a part of us, through a lifetime of seeking God in His Word, we can hear more clearly when He is seeking to emphasize something He's telling us, encouraging us to pay extra-careful attention.

So the other week I had one of those "God's-underlining-something-for-me" moments. I heard one of my favorite verses, and it spoke to me in a new and poignant way. In Matthew 11:28, Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." I was reminded that I, me personally, was someone who is often weary and burdened. With that phrase already identified and properly "aimed" at myself, I was able to hear the verse as Jesus' words for me: "Come to me, Aaron...I'll give you rest." A tender invitation. A promise of care, respite, and a lifting of burdens.

I often need to be reminded that I can't make God's Kingdom come on my own. I feel the responsibility. But like Greg Finke likes to say, Jesus always does the "heavy lifting." A pastor friend of mine recently said it like this: "Work like it all depends on you; leave the results to God." God invites us to join Him in the harvest fields where He alone makes things grow. When I start to feel like I have to do the impossible work of making things grow and produce fruit, work that truly belongs only in the capable hands of God, He gently invites me back to my identity as His very much-loved child: "Come to me... I'll give you rest."

I pray that this summer provides opportunities for you to hear these words of Jesus for yourself, and to step out in faith, to embrace the physical, mental, and spiritual rest that comes with spending time with Jesus and others. Wherever God sends you this summer, it's still true that...

Adventure is out there!
Pastor Aaron



JULY MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

Our missionary of the month for July will be Rev. Dr. Jonathan Naumann and his wife, Deaconess Cheryl Naumann – they serve through LCMS and are based in the Dominican Republic. Jonathan is the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regional chaplain and provides pastoral care to LCMS missionaries and their families in over ten countries. He also teaches future Latin American pastors at the LCMS seminaries in this region.

Cheryl administers the Dominican Republic Mercy Center, teaching women to share the Gospel and to carry out acts of mercy with their neighbors. She also assists with the diaconal work in mission congregations and facilitates the Spanish translation and distribution of Lutheran biblical resources to LCMS missionaries, mission churches and partner churches in this region. Both Jonathan and Cheryl love to speak about Jesus with the people they meet each day.



Preaching in Spanish

Jonathan was born in Springfield, Ill., but also considers London, England, to be home. He received a bachelor's degree from Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., and his Master of Divinity from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind. He earned his Ph.D. from Glasgow University, Scotland. Jonathan served as a missionary pastor for over two decades in East Kilbride, Scotland and Ruislip, England, and then as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church and School, Oakmont, Pa. He has worked extensively with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England and has theologically educated students in the United States and abroad.

Cheryl's hometown is Bremerton, Wash. She received a bachelor's degree from Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Ind., on May 20, 1979, and was consecrated as a Lutheran deaconess that

same day. She earned a master's degree in theology and church history from Glasgow University, Scotland. Cheryl has served as a deaconess at Lutheran Home for the Aged, Kendallville, Ind., and by her husband's side at congregations in Scotland, England and Pennsylvania. Over the years, Cheryl has worked as a freelance writer and editor, authoring three of her own books, and has taught deaconess students in the U.S., Latin America and Africa. Jonathan and Cheryl have six adult children and 20 grandchildren.



Rev. Dr. Naumann's mission congregation

During the month of July, Immanuel members will have the opportunity to provide financial support for the Naumann's ministry needs. Throughout the month, the stewardship free will offering box will be located in the lobby. You may write checks payable to Immanuel Lutheran and note Rev. Dr. and Deaconess Naumann-Latin America on the memo line. Online donations will also be accepted – go to immanuelmokena.org/electronic-giving and choose World Missions (under Select Fund) to make a one-time donation.

We can also support them through our prayers. Pray for Jonathan and Cheryl as they serve in the Dominican Republic. Ask God to protect them as they travel and do the work He has created for them to do. Pray that God will increase the faith of those whom they serve in Latin America.

Pastor Aaron [interviewed Jonathan](#) to learn more about their work and the challenges they face — we hope you enjoy the video.

JUMP ON THE BUS DONATIONS

By Barb Malm

MorningStar Mission is already starting their plans to provide local students with items they'll likely need for the 2021-2022 school year. The Board of Stewardship is again coordinating efforts to assist in this project. Donations of **new** items will be collected June 26 - July 11 and can be dropped off in the church lobby.



This year the donation requests are a little more specific:

Hoodies:

- **Girls sizes 7/8, 12/14, 16/18**
- **Womens sizes XS, L, XL (but for teenage girl)**
- **Boys sizes 12/14, 12, 14**

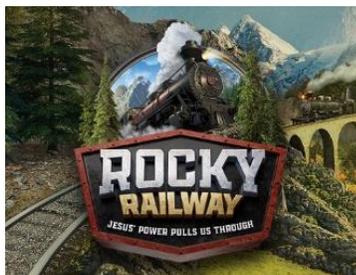
Earbuds that have a wire and a mic on them.

We will also accept monetary donations. Thank you for any assistance you are able to provide!

VBS - ALL ABOARD FOR THE ROCKY RAILWAY!

By Lyn Thorne

Register soon for VBS – deadline is July 7! We have rewritten our entire playbook for this year. We will invite the whole family with children from 3 years old to 4th grade to bring their blanket and join us for an outdoor adventure from 6:00pm to 7:15pm Tuesday-Thursday, July 20-22. A parent or grandparent must accompany the children. Youth, families, empty nesters, you can join us – to volunteer or just to attend! There will be no charge this year, but one thing will stay the same, IT WILL STILL BE ALL ABOUT JESUS! Spread the word!



Portals of Prayer

The July-September edition of Portals of Prayer are available in the lobby and in the blue bin outside the church office entry. Large print editions are also available.

CONNECTION CARD

1 Mission: Make Disciples
2 Places: Temple & Table
3 Key Relationships: Up, In, Out

CONNECTION CARD

Check out our new connection card! It has the weekly Launching Point from the sermon, Bible readings and prayer for the week, and our prayer list. Pick one up at the Welcome Center each week or find it on the homepage of our website immanuelmokena.org

FOLLOW US ... ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



Immanuel has been on Facebook for many years, but we recently increased our activity, and we are now on Instagram as well. Please follow us (you can click the logos above to find us) and share our posts on Facebook to increase our reach into the community.

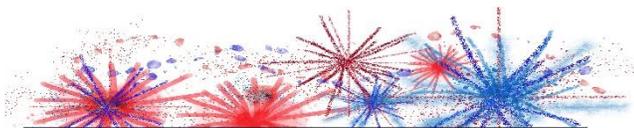
Another way to increase our online visibility is with 5-star reviews on Facebook and Google. Please leave a 5-star review sharing how Immanuel has helped you in your faith journey. (If you don't feel you can leave a 5-star review, please contact Jerry Vrshek, director of the board of elders, to discuss any issues. You can reach Jerry at 815-953-8153 or jkvrshk@comcast.net.)

To leave a review, use these links:

[Facebook review](#)

[Google review](#)

Thank you for helping us improve our online presence so we can more effectively reach our community and share the love of Jesus.



Preschool News

Registration has begun! Tell your friends and neighbors to check out the [preschool webpage](#) for a virtual tour and information on how to enroll.

We are searching for an assistant director/teacher.

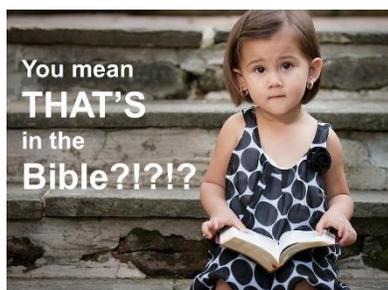
Assistant Director/Teacher position - Part-time Assistant Director/Teacher position is available for the 2021-2022 school year. Up to 25 hours per week mid-August through June. Preschool has 2-day, 3-day and 5-day AM classes. Please submit resume to: education@immanuelmokena.org

Job Requirements: Required qualifications include: Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development; teaching experience in early childhood education.



Mite box offerings will continue to be collected on the first weekend of each month. Pick up a mite box (bank) from the LWML table in the narthex and encourage all members of your family to participate in this "super-easy" way of supporting

missions – thanking you in advance for your support in sharing the love of God around the world!!



SUMMER SERMON SERIES

This summer's sermons will focus on things we might be surprised to find

in the Bible. Fill out a short form in the Welcome Center or email Pastor Aaron if there was ever something that you were surprised to learn was in the Bible. Or search your Bible this week and tell us something you were surprised to find in the Bible.

CONTACT information



Update Your Info!

New cell phone number?
New email address?

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



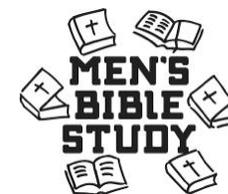
Online Bible Study

Women of the Word

We are meeting using Zoom. If you would like a link to be invited to our virtual Women of the Word,

please send an email to Leeann at dceleeann04@yahoo.com. We will continue looking at the Sermon on the Mount. Newcomers are welcome!

Meeting Dates: On summer break – resumes August 23



Men of the Word

We are meeting online but are looking toward meeting together outdoors soon. If you would like a link to the online meeting, contact Pastor Aaron.

Meeting Dates: On summer break – resumes August 16

JOIN OUR TEAM

LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH
16301 WOLF ROAD ORLAND PARK, IL

Do you love teaching children?
Do you love sharing the love of Jesus? We are looking to hire an experienced preschool teacher for our 2021/2022 school year.

Email your cover letter and resume to LWLCmedia@yahoo.com

LUTHERAN SCHOOL STAFF OPENINGS

Living Word Lutheran Preschool in Orland Park is looking for a preschool teacher. Send a cover letter and resume to LWLCmedia@yahoo.com.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

2 Sid Victor
 3 Maetha Smith
 6 Jim Braner
 7 Michael Dudczyk
 7 Andy Lopez
 8 Beth Loucks
 8 Mike Navratil
 9 Ryan Banser
 9 Kalie Bartnik
 9 Riley Saltzman
 10 Nina Heidkamp
 10 Zane Zellers
 11 Jessica Podgorny
 13 Carson Fleckenstein
 14 Alyssa Bell
 14 Jordan Horneij
 15 Keith Karpola
 15 Jason Nagy
 16 Chelsea Chiaro
 17 James Nagy
 18 Zackery Hayes
 19 Cody Fenn
 19 Jill Smith
 20 Jake Hostert
 20 Colleen Maranto
 21 Peyton Burke
 22 Dakota Perrin
 22 Jarred Schellhas
 23 Delynn Flannery
 23 Bob Schultz
 25 Jacob Kruspe
 25 Colin Nass
 26 Tyler Maranto
 27 Daniel James Foiles
 28 Zachary Bubeck
 28 Naomi Nagy
 28 Kathy Temple
 29 Gary Smith
 30 Sarah Bechtel

Anniversaries

3 Don & Gayle Snedden 50 years
 4 Paul & Wanda Dillberg 27 years

8 Ray & Doris Fleckenstein 32 years
 17 Art & Eileen Hostert 50 years
 20 Amy & Benny Greenspan 30 years
 20 Bruce & Barb Malm 36 years
 23 Donald & Linda Jeffrey 33 years
 27 Brittany & Nick Pattenaude 8 years
 29 Keith & Colleen Maranto 32 years
 30 Greg & Marsha Flesch 33 years
 30 Stephen & Kim Thompson 16 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.

Altar Flowers By Barb Belanski

Please contact Barb Belanski, (773) 704-1416 or sign up in the Opportunity Book in the church lobby. Each bouquet is \$22.50; both bouquets for \$45. For the summer it will be one flower arrangement for \$45. Checks should be made payable to the Ruth Society and placed in the offering plate or lockbox by office entrance. Be sure to write Altar Flowers on the memo line. The Ruth Society would like to thank all those that have ordered flowers in the past and for honoring the Lord.

Ways to Submit an Offering

- **Drop off** a check (or cash in sealed envelope with your name) in the secure black lockbox by the church office entrance door.
- **Mail** a check to the office: 10731 W La Porte Rd, Mokena, IL 60448
- **Electronic Giving** – go to the website, www.immanuelmokena.org, and click on Electronic Giving under the Giving menu. Fill in the secure form with either credit card or checking account information to submit offering.
- **Joyful Response:** many members already use this service which automatically debits their checking account at a specified interval (weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, etc.) for a specified amount. The form can be found on the Electronic Giving page on the website – just fill it out and drop off or mail to the church office.

Faith at Home Options

How to find the Vlog and Live Streaming Worship Services...

- www.immanuelmokena.org – Go to Connect, select Live Stream
- 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)