
INTEGRATE

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



Volume 64 No. 3

March 2022

ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENTEN SERVICES

Lenten services will be in person this year on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday – March 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Lenten Services – March 9, 16, 26, 30, April 6 at 7:00 p.m.



ANNUAL COMMITMENTS

Please fill out [this online commitment card form](#). Responses are completely confidential and anonymous. Paper forms are available in the lobby if preferred.

Please submit responses no later than Sunday, March 6.

SPRING FOOD DRIVE

We will once again support the Frankfort Township Food Pantry with a spring drive. This year's collection dates are March 19th through April 3rd – please look in the lobby for the collection boxes. Any non-perishable food items or paper products are welcome donations, but see page 5 for the items that their website lists as most needed.



NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING FUNDRAISER FOR MARCH

Immanuel! Thank you for participating in our fundraisers as we seek to reach our \$4000 goal for the National Youth Gathering. Your generosity reflects the character of God. Our God always seeks to give us every good thing. Thank you for setting a living example to us of how to cheerfully give. (2 Corinthians 9:6-15) Our March Fundraiser will directly support one part of our Gathering budget: food. See page 4 for more details!

FROM THE BOARD OF FELLOWSHIP

Hoppy News! The Easter Bunny has agreed to join us for a Photo Opportunity again this year! On Saturday, April 9th, from 9am until 1pm at the church. Advanced registrations will be required and will open in Mid-March on the church website. Families will be asked to bring a donation for the Animal Shelter. A list of items will be included in the families registration confirmation.



VOLUNTEER TO READ THE BIBLE LESSONS

The Elders are looking at re-instating the "Readers" program where members read the Old Testament and Epistle lessons as part of the church service. If you would like to participate in this program, please sign up by adding your name in the book on the welcome center in the lobby. Put your name on the week you want to read.

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	JAN 2022	2022 YTD	2021 YTD	YOY Change	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Offering	29,791	29,791	25,475	4,316	17
Interest	18	18	26	-8	-31
Facility	500	500	0	500	100
Expense	27,932	27,932	28,076	-144	-1
Balance	2,377	2,377	-2,575	4,952	192

> Pastor's Scholarship Fund Balance \$7,350

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

Announcement & Integrate Publishing

Announcements are due on Wednesdays by 9 a.m. Articles for the April *Integrate* are due by March 28 and will be on our website, emailed, and mailed after **April 1st**. The *Integrate* Newsletter is also available online at immanuelmokena.org

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

Official Acts

--None in February--

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 _____ **MAKE CHECK PAYABLE**

Rays of HOPE

Rays Of Hope

God's Kids Club

Immanuel Lutheran

Include on Memo: God's Kids Club

Ruth Society

Ruth Society

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

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.



CONVERSATION STARTERS FROM THE PASTOR

A Story to Tell (Pt. 1)

We all have a story to tell. It's in our nature. God created the world with His powerful Word, and He made us co-creators in a world full of raw materials that only He could create. And while great monuments have been erected to the adventures and exploits of humankind, they are simply markers for something deeper. They point to a story that must be told, and stand as a reminder that some stories should never be forgotten.

Our scriptures, the Bible, stands head and shoulders above all other historical documents and artifacts as a testament to God's work in our world. Just under 43% of the entire text is considered narrative, with the rest of the documents and genres supporting that narrative, fleshing it out, giving it life through rich detail. It is often referred to as the "Greatest Story Ever Told," and its central figure is the One we call Savior and Lord. St. Augustine, one of the forebears of and greatest influences on Dr. Martin Luther, once said, "The New Testament lies hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is unveiled in the New." Every bit of the Bible story points toward Jesus, the Word made flesh. The One who makes every story come alive through redemption, through resurrection in the wake of a death.

God's word has a story to tell. So do you. Jesus loved to tell stories, and if we are going to follow in His footsteps, then telling stories should be something we embrace and aim to master. Now, I could imagine a simple objection that many of you may give to this crucial encouragement and even command from Jesus to tell the Good News story: "I'm not good at telling stories." I beg to differ. EVERYONE has a story to tell. Just ask them what they did throughout the day. For the past week. Ask them what their highlight was from the past year, or the biggest struggle they encountered.

Just about anyone who pays attention to their own life will be able to tell you a story. Like my favorite public intellectual Dr. Jordan Peterson likes to say, people are fascinating, and if you think they are boring, it reveals more about your lack of attention to them than it does about how fascinating they are. The stories you tell may not be as grand or deep as the biblical narrative, but they are stories nonetheless, and they have a place in the tapestry of history. Then again, I'll bet you could come up with 10 moments in the history of your life that would be worthwhile to craft well, share, and retell throughout the years as you gain the insight that a well-examined life often provides. Yes, YOU have a story to tell.

The apostle John starts his gospel out with Jesus' place in the beginning of all things. He calls Him the Word. Before the first chapter is done, he places that creative Word, the character of the Logos, embodied by Jesus Christ, into the warp and weft of human history. Now THAT is a story to tell. What does this Word Incarnate do? Apart from the miraculous healings and feedings, apart from the central episode in human history, when he died and rose, Jesus told stories. Stories. Most of them could be simply understood by a small child. The depth of insight below that surface level hearing, however, reaches straight down to the substructure and foundation of history, philosophy, theology, and every other aspect of human civilization.

So what part is Jesus calling you and I to play in this grand narrative? I don't know, but I'm excited to find out! Literature teachers will tell you that every protagonist is the hero of his or her own story, whether they end up in a place of comedy or tragedy. God has a story for you to live, to tell. He is working powerfully in your life even now, if you have the eyes to see it. By virtue of your baptism, as a child of the King of all things, YOU have a story to tell. So go tell it. And you know how these things go. One good story often leads to another, then to another, all the way to Kingdom come. I believe that one of the most beautiful and important things we can do in this lifetime is

to live out and SHARE the truth and beauty of the following statement:

Adventure is out there!
Pastor Aaron



2022 NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING NEWS
By Leeann Schellhas

Immanuel! Thank you for participating in our fundraisers as we seek to reach our \$4,000 goal for the National Youth Gathering. Your generosity reflects the character of God. Our God always seeks to give us every good thing. Thank you for setting a living example to us of how to cheerfully give. (2 Corinthians 9:6-15)



Thank you so much for your generous support during our Used Book Sale and Valentine Fundraiser. We raised \$830.28. Your participation in our fundraisers is so appreciated!

"SPONSOR A MEAL"

Our March Fundraiser will directly support one part of our Gathering budget: food. There will be a display of envelopes in the Lobby beginning the weekend of March 12/13. Each envelope will have a date, meal time (breakfast/lunch/dinner) and an amount listed as the suggested donation. A few of the envelopes will highlight specific events happening on that day. If you are interested in sponsoring a meal, please take an envelope. Inside will be a small form for you to fill out. We want to return thanks to you by sending you a text message and picture while we are at the Gathering. Please return the original envelope, completed form, and money to the church office or place it in the Offering Plate by March 27. Thank you!



A Note From Nancy Mirocha

I deeply appreciate all of the kind words, cards, food, visits and prayers during this recuperation time. We are so blessed to have such wonderful friends.



RUTH SOCIETY

Ruth Society will meet on Thursday, March 3 at 7:00 p.m.



SPRING FOOD DRIVE

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- Bags (garbage & kitchen)
- Storage Plastic Bags (Gallon, Qt, & Sandwich)
- Canned Meats (beef stew, hash, Spam)
- Cleaning Products
- Coffee – small sizes please
- Deodorant (mens/womens)
- Dish Soap
- Foil & Plastic Wraps
- Ketchup & BBQ Sauce
- Kleenex
- Laundry Products
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Paper Towels
- Razors
- Rice Mixes (Knorr)
- Salad Dressings
- Salt & Pepper Sets
- Soap (liquid & bar)
- Toilet Paper
- Taco Shells & Seasoning

Please keep the food drive in mind as you do your shopping! Thank you!

IMMANUEL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH PASTOR'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

A generous donation has been given to our church to start a Scholarship Fund to be used by the Pastor's children when they go to college. The church is following up on this donation, starting the Scholarship Fund, and asking our members if they would like to donate to this fund. The money will be kept in a savings account until the time that it is needed for college expenses. It will not go with the Pastor if he accepts a call to another congregation. The money is to be used by the children of the current Pastor of Immanuel.

If you would like to donate to this Scholarship Fund, please make your check out to Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church and write Scholarship Fund on the memo line. You can also use one of the envelopes in your offering box and write Scholarship Fund on the envelope. This will be an ongoing fund. You can donate as often as you like, weekly, monthly, or annually.

The Elders thank you for your generosity in supporting this endeavor.

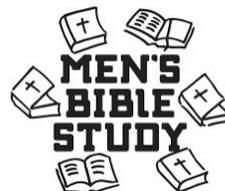


Women of the Word

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 dceleann04@yahoo.com. We will continue looking at the Sermon on the Mount. Newcomers are welcome!

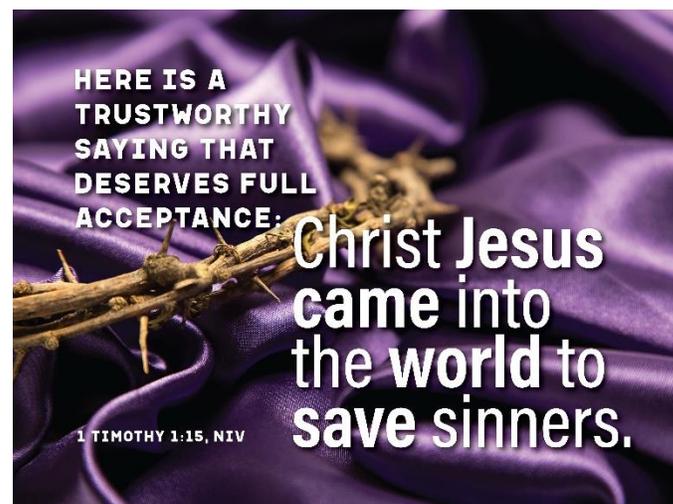
Meeting Dates: March 14,



Men of the Word

Men of the Word will be meeting via Zoom and will be discussing Chapter 8 of the book Saturate.

Meeting Dates: March 7 & 21





I wanted to share with you some quick updates about what has been happening in the preschool.

We currently have 69 children in our program. Enrollment for next year is going so well that most classes are full and we are going to open an afternoon class. We have stayed COVID free and hope to keep that going for the next three months. Fingers crossed and lots of prayers.



We have updated our classroom rugs and are just waiting on our new kitchen sets for our house-keeping areas in the classrooms.

The year has been amazing and all of us are looking forward to a strong finish to the school year. Hard to believe that it is only a few months away to the end. Thank you for your prayers and support through out the year. Also, watch for information about our plant sale that is coming.



PORTALS OF PRAYER

The April – June issue of Portals of Prayer are now available. We have both regular size and large-print size. You may pick one up at the Welcome Center or in the blue bin outside the church office door.



MARCH

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1 Paul Dillberg
- 1 Marc Golembiewski
- 1 Melissa Lipscomb
- 1 Nolan Marnul
- 2 Addison Linstead
- 3 Richard Belanski
- 4 Tyler Kaiser
- 4 Marty Olsen
- 6 Ted Fenn
- 6 Rachel Greenspan
- 7 Marita Navratil
- 8 Lisa Bartnik
- 8 Millie Shepich
- 8 Michael Sneideraitis
- 9 Randy Besse
- 9 Marlene Cupp
- 9 Don Snedden
- 9 Jill Strilich
- 10 Ted Fuka
- 10 Blake Lopez
- 10 Morris Threewitt
- 11 Barb Malm
- 11 Autumn Ryan
- 11 Colton Ryan
- 13 Randi Krol
- 13 Keith Maranto
- 13 Susan Schuh
- 15 Abby Howard
- 16 Ronald Berger
- 17 Susan Olsen
- 18 Mandy Baker
- 18 Ashley Pomykala
- 19 Sara Bell
- 19 Jodi Klode
- 20 Lucas Wojno
- 21 Hannah Burdette
- 21 Katie Krol
- 23 Barbara Belanski
- 23 Lou Dawn Howard
- 25 Becky Bouck
- 25 Gail Compagnoni
- 25 Ruth Welzen
- 26 Cindy Anderson
- 29 Laura Strobel
- 30 Herbert Teske
- 31 Jackie Hansen
- 31 Lauren Tustin

Anniversaries

- 2 Dave & Marcia Proskan 32 years
- 11 Kathy & Wayne Temple 49 years
- 15 Leslie & John Cosich 47 years
- 17 Gary & Judy Smith 60 years
- 21 Mike & Laura Saltzman 26 years
- 26 Beth & James Loucks 34 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; table centerpiece \$35. 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.
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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)