

The Spirit of Immanuel

December 2018



Now there are varieties of Gifts, but the same Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:4

Immanuel Lutheran Church

- * Worship Services
Sundays, 10:00 am
- * Sunday School
9:00 am
for Pre-school
through High School
- * Weekly Fellowship
- * Choir and Chimes
- * Prayer Chain

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To the Members of Immanuel:

In June of this year our church council commissioned a stewardship committee to consider ways that Immanuel's investments might be used to serve others.

The committee members are two council members, Don Brucker and Terry Bose, two congregants, Jerry Kukuck and Louann Harms, and is chaired by the church treasurer, Marcia Buchs.

During the past few months we have studied the church's investments, met with a financial advisor, and developed a proposal that we feel will lead members of Immanuel to consider how they are called to be good stewards of the financial gifts God has seen fit to bless us with as a congregation.

Louann Harms inspired us with her idea to base the proposal on Matthew 25, vs 31-45 where Christ talks about helping the thirsty, the hungry, the lonely, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned. The passage reminds us of the familiar exhortation from Christ: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (vs 40).

After discussing ideas for one or two big projects and the difficulties inherent in choosing a project that met a significant majority of the different members'

*Truly, I tell you,
whatever you did for one of
the least of these
brothers and sisters of mine,
you did for me.*
~MATTHEW 25:40

needs and gifts, an idea was put forward to fund a project where each member could choose when, where and how, and how much they served.

The committee is excited to propose the Matthew 25 Project which offers three ways that members could become involved in the mission of serving others.

MATCHING The first way to serve would be to contribute monetarily to a charitable effort of your choosing and the project fund would match your gift up to \$200/member/year.

SWEAT EQUITY The second way for you to serve would be to offer your time and effort to a charitable effort. When a total of 4 hours of service is reached, you could apply for \$20/hour to be donated to a charitable cause of your choice. This could be done individually or as a group. For instance if four quilters get together for 3 hours one morning and quilt, they could apply for 12 hours (\$240) to be donated to a charitable cause of their choosing (what a meaningful conversation could be had about where to donate while quilting!).

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Community in Christ

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Another example would be someone who signs up with their co-workers to work 6 hours on a Saturday at a Habitat for Humanity site. They could request their sweat equity dollars (\$120) go to Habitat or another charity of their choice. Because through service to others, God often offers us blessings we can hardly imagine, the committee decided to not limit service hours in an effort to encourage members to go out into the world and find their passion, the discernment of which is often an unexpected blessing of service.

MISSION EXPENSES The third way you could access the funds is to go on a mission trip outside the local area. Not only could you apply for the sweat equity dollars but also request reimbursement of expenses for the trip including fuel, accommodations, and meals. The committee is especially excited about this feature of the project for our youth. Instead of spending their time and energy fund raising for a mission trip expenses, they could instead focus their activities on helping others and any money they raise through those activities go to the folks Christ reminds us about in Matthew 25.

The stewardship committee would meet monthly to approve all expenditures. It was discussed that the committee wants to make sure the charities benefitting from this fund are truly not-for-profit organizations dedicated to serving others as described in Matthew 25. Requests related to helping individuals will be considered but may require some additional documentation.

The Committee is also proposing that the committee or the council could also access the fund to make a donation to a specific need, should one arise.

This is a summary of the proposed project as it stands now. We welcome input in the next couple months and a more specific document will be available after the first of the year for members to review prior to the annual meeting in late January.

It is hoped that at the annual meeting the proposal and its attendant budget amendment can be voted upon.

The idea of the establishment of a stewardship committee came about primarily based on the fact we had nearly a half million dollars in cash assets and investments as of the first of 2018. As your treasurer I was constantly reminded of this blessing through the steady stream of financial documents that I was attending to and filing every month. Over half of those assets comes from a single stock that was donated to the church by Louis Martens over 25 years ago and has steadily grown since then. At the beginning of 2018 the Nextera stock was worth approximately \$300,000. Seeing as Mr. Martens did not designate how it was to be used, it has been suggested that the amount of the initial funding of this project be determined by the amount unrealized gains of the stock since the beginning of 2018. In mid September when we met with a financial advisor, it was worth \$332,941. As I write this, this stock is currently worth \$341,000. Even our financial advisor shook his head when confronted with the fabulous return this single stock has had over the years, and especially this year. This is not coincidence, good people of Immanuel. I believe it is God's way of telling us to go forward and serve with faith that He has great plans for the "returns" on our investment in service.

Please consider this project prayerfully in the next weeks and let me, any of your stewardship committee members or council members know if you have any questions or concerns. We want this project to engage as many members as possible and if you have ideas for helping us make it more inclusive or impactful, please let us know!

Respectfully,

Marcia Buchs, Treasurer

THANK YOU from the Fairbury Food Pantry for the donation of 45 hams from Immanuel and 3 boxes of sweet potatoes from Gary and Marcia Buchs.

The Food Pantries always appreciate our donations.



The Pastor's Page

Christmas Eve worship

Monday, December 24 will be at
5:00pm @ Trinity Lutheran Church
and 7:00pm @ Immanuel
Lutheran Church.



In a darkened space made calm and sacred in candle light, we shall join hearts and voices in serenade; the inspired words of Joseph Mohr are as peaceful as the warmth that glows over our faces, "Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light..." Can it really be so? In the midst of the stress and business, the heartache and loneliness, the dreams unfulfilled and the struggle to trust - can love's pure light penetrate our heart and soul, our mind and strength?

Immanuel Lutheran Church's Choir will lead us to "Love's Pure Light (a Candle Lighting Ceremony for Advent)" by Joel Raney. Week by week the light will advance as our choir leads us candle by candle to the culmination on Christmas Eve. Each candle each week will illuminate a unique focus:

🕯 **HOPE** calls for us on December 2 (Advent 1). Our children's sermon will beg the question of how hope fills in the spaces in between. The homily ponders what promise is worth putting our trust in.

🕯🕯 **PEACE** evades our longing too often, but for it we will search on December 9 (Advent 2). Love's pure light radiates from the Gospel of Luke in the day's psalmody, "In the tender compassion of our God the dawn... shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and guide [us] into the way of peace."

🕯🕯🕯 **JOY** will be brought to light in our **children's Christmas service** on December 16 (Advent 3). Heeding Jesus' call to be like children and follow him, with the prophet Isaiah let us "Shout aloud and sing for joy... for in your midst is the Holy One!"

🕯🕯🕯🕯 **LOVE** will be favored upon and sung out by Mary, the mother of our Lord on December 23 (Advent 4). Is Mary the only one of us to bear Love within her?



CHRIST IS OUR LIGHT, the LIGHT that makes CHRISTmas truly a gift, when "on a long winter evening we gather to proclaim the coming of the light" on December 24 (Christmas Eve). Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled, that "the people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined." It will shine where you are, too.

Jesus preached during a sermon on a mount, "let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify our Father in heaven." May our Father be glorified on December 22 (Saturday) when our LYO will do good works at the Midwest Food Bank in Normal! May our days be filled with love's pure light.

Church Council Minutes

October 8, 2018

ATTENDANCE: Danny Harms, Elton Mau, Marcia Buchs, Angie Kratochvil, Terry Bose, Kolton Brucker, Tracy Harms, Pastor Tom

Pastor Tom opened the meeting with devotion and prayer.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Angie read the September 10th minutes. Kolton motioned to approve, and Elton seconded. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Marcia presented the September Balance and Profit and Loss reports as well as the January-September Profit and Loss report. The general fund is -\$743.04 for the month of September. Angie motioned to approve, and Tracy seconded. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

Pastor presented his report. Elton motioned to accept the report, and Tracy seconded. Motion carried.

Angie motioned and Terry seconded that Brock Jackman be confirmed on Reformation Sunday, October 28, 2018. Brock completed confirmation classes the previous year. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Robin Jones will be paid \$30 per trip for choir rehearsals and performances.
- We will hold a 2019 budget meeting with the congregation on November 18 after church.
- We are still on the list for Windel Concrete to replace the front sidewalk as well as fixing the bell tower and the crooked letter E.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Terry motioned, and Marcia seconded, to move the November meeting to November 5. Motion carried. The council will prepare the 2019 budget at this meeting, with distribution to the congregation on November 11.
- Budget ideas include adding the choir accompanist to the organist line item, thus increasing that amount.
- Marcia shared a thank you from St. Vincent de Paul Society in Bloomington for the freshly harvested potatoes. The potatoes we harvested were divided among six locations plus eaten at church during our potato bake.

Terry motioned to adjourn, and Elton seconded. Motion carried. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting will be Monday, November 5 at 7:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Kratochvil

Council Members

Dan Harms

Elton Mau

Don Brucker

Terry Bose

Dan Kukuck

Tracy Harms

Kolton Brucker

Marcia Buchs

Angie Kratochvil

Pastor Tom Krieger

Parish Education Committee

Yvonne Becker

Rebecca Casson

Louann Harms

Jeanie Weber

Youth Director

Briana Ray



December 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Each Sunday - 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Worship						
2 Dale Harris Colton Weber	3  Jerry & Cindy Wilson Joseph Grimes Jennifer Poppe	4	5 7:00 / 7:45 pm Choir / Chimes Gary Buchs	6	7 Dennis Griepentrog	8 Brandt Harris
9	10 7:00 pm Council Meeting	11	12 7:00 / 7:45 pm Choir / Chimes Trent Thedens	13	14	15 Bryden Mosier Cory Winterland
16 Sunday School Christmas Service 10:00 am	17 Pastor Tom Krieger	18	19 7:00 / 7:45 pm Choir / Chimes	20 Iva Mae Petersen	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm	25 Christmas Day	26 Jeffrey Edwards Denny Winterland	27	28 Lacey Gleeson Justin Powell	29  Jon & Maggie Miller Jenny Compston
30 Darby Gleeson Danielle Powell	31  Keith & Julianne Jacob					

Worship Assistants

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Communion</u>	<u>Ushers / Acolytes</u>
Dec. 2	Sue Coldren	Sheri Ganske, Sharon Hardesty	Jerry Kukuck	Kourtney & Kolton B.
Dec. 9	Leslie Garthaus	Mike & Leslie Garthaus		Ainsley & Ashlyn K.
Dec. 16	Kevin Harms	Norman & Karen Harms	Elton Mau, Harlan B.	John & Cindy Harris
Dec. 23	Louann Harms	Kevin & Louann Harms		Keith W. & Harlan B.
Dec. 24	Dan Harms	Dan & Tracy Harms	Denny & Amy Winterland	Parker & Ty Harms
Dec. 30	Karen Harms	Matt Harms		Dan & Kevin Harms
Jan. 6	Cindy Harris	Andrew & Stephanie Harper	Joyce Miller, Chuck Weber	Peyton & Cam R.

Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Newsletter information or member phone & address changes may be sent to Cindy Wilson at ckwilson1983@gmail.com

*Our Wish for you this
Blessed Christmas Season -*

**May he so strengthen
your hearts in holiness
that you may be blameless
before our God and Father
at the coming of our
Lord Jesus with all his saints.**

1 THESSALONIANS 3:13, NRSV