

SAVED

By Grace,

CALLED

To Serve.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 55
Atwater, MN 56209

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit Number 2

Address Service Requested

He IS Not Here

...He HAS RISEN! Matthew 28:6

Easter Celebration: Sunday, April 20, 6:30 a.m.

Sunrise Service: 6:30 a.m.

Easter Breakfast: 7:15 a.m.

Easter Worship: 9:00 a.m.

Rev. Christa Forsythe, Pastor
christaforsythe@gmail.com
Cell: 320.535.0641

Janelle Eisenbacher
Office Administrator

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Office Administrator

Church Contact Information

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Facebook: Immanuel Lutheran - Atwater, MN



Volume XXXIV - Number IV - April 2014

The **OUTREACH**

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

April 2

5:30 p.m.Lenten Supper
7:00 p.m.Lenten Worship @ Bethlehem

April 6 - 5th Sunday of Lent

9:00 a.m.Worship/Holy Communion
10:00 a.m.Fellowship
10:15 a.m.Sunday School/Confirmation

April 9

5:30 p.m.Lenten Supper
7:00 p.m.Lenten Worship @ Immanuel

April 13 - Palm/Passion Sunday

9:00 a.m.Worship/Holy Communion
**SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN SING
& LEAD PALM PROCESSIONAL
1ST COMMUNION SUNDAY**
10:00 a.m.Fellowship
10:15 a.m.Sunday School/Confirmation

April 16 - Maundy Thursday

7:00 p.m.Worship/Communion @ Bethlehem

April 17 - Good Friday

7:00 p.m.Worship @ Immanuel

April 20 - Easter Sunday

6:30 a.m. Sunrise Worship/Holy Communion
7:15 a.m.Easter Breakfast
9:00 a.m.Worship/Holy Communion
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL - NO CONFIRMATION

April 27 - 2nd Sunday of Easter

9:00 a.m.Worship
NO COMMUNION TODAY
10:00 a.m.Fellowship
10:15 a.m.Sunday School/Confirmation

LENTEN WORSHIP

Our Lenten Theme is: *Traveling Light: Reflections on the 23rd Psalm, based on the book of the same title by Max Lucado.* The remaining midweek worship schedule is:

April 2Bethlehem
April 9Immanuel
April 17 - Maundy ThursdayBethlehem
April 18 - Good FridayImmanuel

All services will be at 7 p.m. Supper served 4/2 & 4/9 from 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. at the host church.



HOLY WEEK

Palm/Passion Sunday

Palm Sunday, April 13, we celebrate the triumphal entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, the week before his death and resurrection. We worship at 9 a.m. Our Sunday School children will lead our Palm Processional at the beginning of the service.

Maundy Thursday

The Lord's Last Supper will be celebrated on Maundy Thursday, April 17. The service will be at Bethlehem at 7 p.m.

Good Friday

We will gather at the foot of the cross on Good Friday, April 18, at 7 p.m. Our service will be at Immanuel. Come and experience Good Friday's "shadows and darkness." This time will help prepare us for the empty tomb of Easter.

Easter Sunrise/Easter Worship

April 20, we gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. We will worship at 6:30 a.m. (sunrise) and again at 9:00 a.m. Come, worship, and join the Easter proclamation, "Christ is risen!" as we find our lives made new in Christ. Alleluia!

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

“To Pray is to Laugh, Whistle – **DANCE** on happy feet
Sing! **SHOUT** and jump! higher than ever before.

But it is also to *whisper* – Wonder...

Stumble in dark places. Cry... SCREAM

or just hold a tired head in tired hands and wait...

PRAYER is our tired reaching out to the *ONE* who holds us closer
and loves us more than we would dare imagine.” – Greta Schrumm

Last spring, as I walked through a very muddy Lake Ripley Cemetery to do the graveside service of a sister in Christ who had died of cancer at age 79... I overheard Bella, a six year old and family member, ask her big sister, “Why do people have to die at all? Why is there death?” At which point the very smart 8th grade big sis, saw me behind them and said – that’s a great question... for Pastor Christa. (ha, ha :-)). Well – little Bella asked me the question, too, and I responded... “That’s a great question, Bella --- a great question we should ask God...”

Now, we didn’t leave it just at that. We talked more, but isn’t that just like a Kindergartner? She asked the very things we as adults often feel the world has taught us NOT to ask anymore --- even when those same questions are at the heart of life for us. It’s precisely for these and all other questions and doubts that I thank God for the disciple Thomas --- a disciple I relate to quite often.

You see... Immediately following Jesus’ resurrection at the tomb that first Easter, Jesus spoke with Mary and then went to speak with the disciples, hiding, scared, terrified that they, too, would be caught like Jesus. Amazingly, Jesus shows up to them in the upper room. He comes and says, “Peace be with you!” Then he tells them, “Do not be afraid.” They are all amazed and rejoice in the good news that Jesus truly is alive! God has done it --- he has defeated the power of death! With the resurrection --- there is hope and new life again!

Yes! – but Thomas missed it. Perhaps he was out getting groceries or food, who knows, but Thomas missed Jesus. So, when they told him the resurrection good news --- he doubted that it was true. Thomas forever carries the weight of being the one who doubted.

Yet, are we all that different from Thomas? Many of us have our doubts, too. How does prayer work? How does God work? Where is God when there is suffering and pain? How does God hear and answer every prayer – especially when my prayer isn’t answered the way I need and want it to? God, where are you when my loved one is suffering? God, where are you --- I need you? & like little Bella, why is there death?

Thomas’ doubts are not so unusual. He wanted to see and touch Jesus’ wounds. But in reality, it was not the seeing and touching that caused Thomas to proclaim, “My Lord and my God.” It was the presence of the One whom his grief and sorrow believed was gone forever. It was the love and grace from the One whom he dared not even hope was alive, for fear of what the disappointment would be if it was not true.

It was the reality of the Living God of this world that helped him believe, not the wounds in Jesus’ hands, feet, or side --- but the love and new life of Jesus Christ himself. The presence of the One who loved him with a love that would NEVER let

Pastor - to page 9

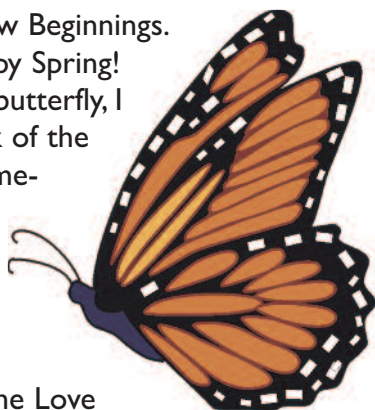
MAY OUTREACH DEADLINE

May Outreach **articles are due** in the church office on
Sunday, April 20.

We will be **folding** the May Outreach Wednesday, **April 30**, at 9:00 a.m.
Helping hands are needed.

WELCA NEWS

Thank God for New Beginnings.
Happy Easter--Happy Spring!
Every time I see a butterfly, I
can't help but think of the
verse that goes some-
thing like this.
"And Behold
Everything shall
become New!"



Updated news of the Love
Offering: My reliable treasurer tells me we are
down about \$400.00 from last year, and, if my
memory is correct, we were also down last year.
What this means for us is that we are not able
to give as much to different groups and organiza-
tions as we would like. The dollars can go out,
just not in as large a fold as before. Like always,
we will take your money toward Love Offering
any time during the year, whenever you are able
to give.

The quilters are still working away making quilts.
Personal issues have taken time away for some of
us. We still will accept anyone that wants to vol-
unteer in some way, whether it's tying a quilt,
putting squares together, or actually making a
quilt. We have no perfect people in our world, so
you can fit in anywhere. I haven't checked if we
have received enough gently used sheets for
quilting, but if we get too many, we will donate
them to a worthy cause.

Serving Group 2 is on Kitchen detail for April.
Please help keep us shining.

If there is a need for WELCA to meet in April,
we can meet during Coffee fellowship. So listen
for any news that may be out there buzzing!



*Sisters in Christ,
Linda Burns
WELCA Interim
President*

ALTAR GUILD MEETING/INFO

Altar guild meeting on Thursday April 10th @7pm.
We will also do some cleaning that night after
meeting. We would like to have all altar guild mem-
bers attend Thursday if possible so we can go over
some new things for altar guild. Saturday morning
April 12th we will finish cleaning. Any men willing
to help on Saturday would be great! Someone
with wood working or carpentry skills to look at
the altar where it is coming apart would also be
welcome!

WOMEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY



The Women's Morning Bible Study meets at
Peaceful Thymes at 9:00 a.m. Thursday mornings.

FAMILY GAME NIGHT

Join us Sunday, March 30, from 5-7 p.m. for sup-

Immanuel's Website is New & Improved!

Visit the church website to view The Outreach,
Weekly Bulletins & The Monthly Calendar.

www.immanuelatwater.com
email: imman@frontiernet.net

Other Helpful Internet Links:
Prayer Ventures:

<http://archive.elca.org/prayerventures/>

Synod Update:

<http://www.swmnelca.org/html/Synod%20Update.html>

GLLM Retreats: www.gllm.org

CARPENTER'S TOOLS

March 30

The Carpenter's Tools musical group will be leading our worship March 30. Immanuel member Erica Borchert sings with this group.

CHOIR PRACTICE

Immanuel's choir will not meet Wednesday, April 2. Join us for practice starting up again April 9 at 6:15 p.m.



EASTER GARDEN FLOWERS

Help celebrate the glory of Easter Sunday by adding a plant to our Easter Garden. Orders will be due to the church office April 6. Plants available are: Easter Lilies, Mums, Cyclamen, and Kalanchoe and cost is \$16.00. Please note: we need 15 Easter Lilies to fill our cross and altar. *'What is Kalanchoe?' you may ask. This plant is pictured to the left! :-)*

CAMP HOUSE B&B

Relaxing by the lake, exploring the North Shore, winding down around a camp fire...bring your family to Camp House for these amazing experiences this summer.

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries is offering a new camp experience this summer: Camp House B & B. Lodging and continental breakfast for you and your family for only \$50 per night, per cabin. Stay 1 night, a weekend or all two weeks, the choice is yours! July 13-25. Contact Katelyn at (320)796-2181 or retreat@gllm.org to reserve your cabin.

FAITH-IN-ACTION LENTEN PROJECT

The Faith-In-Action team is collecting items to pack Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief. The rugged cross is set up in the Narthex with tags listing items that we need to complete our kits. You can simply take a tag, purchase the item(s) and bring them back to church. Items will be due back to Immanuel Palm Sunday, April 13. Our confirmation class will assemble the kits during their class time and send them to Lutheran World Relief for distribution. Instruction sheets will be available.



ATWATER BASEBALL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL SUPPER & SILENT AUCTION



Friday, April 4th, 2014, 5:30-8pm. Brats, Hot Dogs, Burgers, Chips, & Beans. Free will donation with proceeds benefiting local baseball including: ACGC Falcons, Tri-Town Black Sox, Atwater Chuckers, and improvements to Kingery field.

PLAY AT THE BARN THEATRE



As an appreciation to the members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Paul White of Thrivent Financial is offering FREE tickets for the Underwriter's Performance of "An Evening of Culture" at the historic Barn Theatre in downtown Willmar, MN.

The performance is Tuesday, April 8, at 7:30 p.m. Reserve your free seats by calling the Thrivent Office in Litchfield at 320-593-2846 today.

An Evening of Culture: a play within a play...
In Mineola County, the community theatre is producing 'Romeo and Juliet.' And despite the fact that the cast doesn't have their lines memorized, the set is incomplete and a dog keeps barking off stage "the show must go on!"

Audiences all over have laughed uproariously at this spoof of small towns, community theatre thespians and William Shakespeare.

AMERICAN LEGION REQUEST

The Atwater American Legion was started right after World War I and has been active ever since.

The Atwater American Legion has sponsored the Legion Honor Guard, and now our uniforms are getting very old, so we are not proud of the way we honor our departed veterans.

We need 12 uniforms, as everyone can not be present at all events. The Honor Guard is at many funerals each year and also at Memorial Day and Armistice Day.

Each uniform will cost us \$450.00, so to equip all 12 will cost \$5400.00.

As we have no income, we are asking the community donate. We would appreciate your donation. Please send it to P.O. Box 342, Atwater, MN 56209.

Thank You!
Grant Fischer, Commander; Jon Erickson, Treasurer; Ken Slinden, Adjutant



PLEASE JOIN US FOR...

Easter Morning Breakfast

SUNDAY, APRIL 20, FROM 7:15 - 8:45 a.m.
EVERYONE WELCOME!

A FREE-WILL OFFERING WILL BE ACCEPTED. SERVED BY IMMANUEL'S YOUTH GROUP.

FAITH AT HOME - TOOLKIT

Last month several folks and families from ILC will attend Rich Melheim's Family Faith 5 event. Melheim encourages and teaches families of all ages and sizes to practice faith at home together.

I have a toolkit in the Narthex with things that my family has tried at home. I often say Jon and the kids are my guinea pigs for what does and doesn't work with faith life at home. A few of our favorites are Prayer Dice, family question flip cards, and a beloved Kids' Bible. Check out the toolkit and if you or your family want to order one item or the whole kit --- sign-up in the Narthex and prepare to share faith together in meaningful and life-giving ways at home.



Peace - Pastor Christa



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Find us at [Immanuel Lutheran - Atwater, MN](#). We hope to use this site as a valuable outreach tool, and to post announcements and information. There are lots of great photos to see, and it is a great way to stay in touch with church events.

corner

Christian Education

first Communion

There will be one additional First Communion class Tuesday, April 1 at 5:30 p.m. Parents will need to attend with their child. 1st communion kids will be glazing their 1st Communion Chalices during Sunday School soon. First Communion is offered to 5th graders, but can also include any older youth who have not previously had instruction. Those participating in First Communion instruction are invited to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion Sunday, April 13, at our 9 a.m. worship. Please note the date change. We had a scheduling conflict for April 6.

***If you have a child older than 5th grade who has not yet communed, please contact the church office if you would like them to participate in First Communion Instruction.**

sunday School

Thanks for all of your food donations for the food shelf!

Sunday School kids will be singing during the 9 a.m. worship service Palm Sunday, April 13 and also leading our palm procession. Please meet downstairs at 8:45 to get your palms and practice your song.

CAMP REGISTRATION REMINDER

YOU MUST BE REGISTERED WITH GLLM **BY APRIL 27** IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM IMMANUEL. All you need to do is fill out your registration form and send it to GLLM with a \$125 registration fee (sorry, this amount increased from last year!) - you can also register online. In order for us to get our payment made in time, we need to have our final camper numbers by this date. After April 27, you will be notified of the amount being paid by the church. Any additional camp payments can be made directly to Immanuel. If you have any questions, please talk to Janelle.

bible camp Fundraisers

The "Book Sale" Bible Camp Fundraiser continues. Anyone who has gently used books that you are finished with (including children's books) is encouraged to donate books for our sale. **Cost: \$1/hardcover, \$.50/softcover.** Thanks for supporting our campers, and thanks to all those who have donated and purchased books. We plan to continue this fundraiser as long as we have books to sell, so please check out the selection of books regularly!

****BIBLE CAMPERS AND THEIR FAMILIES WILL BE SERVING THE LENTEN SUPPER WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9. PLAN TO BE AT CHURCH BY 5:15 P.M. ANY KIDS PLANNING TO ATTEND BIBLE CAMP SHOULD PLAN TO HELP OUT WITH THE SUPPER. PLEASE BRING 2 DOZEN COOKIES PER FAMILY.**

1x1 pastor Time

Connection Time with Pastor Christa - 6th-12th graders, Pastor Christa wants to connect with you and take you for coffee, ice cream - or whatever. So call or text her at #320-535-0641.

vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is June 1-5 at Bethlehem. We will enjoy a week together on safari - it will be a 'Baobab BLAST!'

Registration forms will be distributed in April, and copies will also be available at church. The fee is \$5/child with a maximum of \$20/family. Please return your registration form by May 11 so we can plan for food and supplies.

We will have a program Thursday, June 5 and our "closing" event will be our worship service Sunday, June 8. VBS kids will be singing during worship that morning.

Christian Education Ministry Team Members

Harold Eisenbacher (council rep) ♦ Jaylen Rossell (council rep)
Barb Everson ♦ Janelle Eisenbacher ♦ Nick Rossell ♦ Shane Hagstrom

christian education Calendar of Events

(watch for monthly updates!)

DATE	TIME - PLACE	EVENT
March 30	5-7 p.m./Immanuel	Family Game Night
April 1	5:30 p.m./Immanuel	First Communion Class
April 9	5:15 p.m./Immanuel	Bible Campers/Families Serve Lenten Supper
April 13		First Communion Sunday
April 13	9 a.m./Immanuel	Sunday School Kids Sing & Lead Palm Processional
April 19	9 a.m. - Noon/Fellowship Hall	Easter Breakfast Set-Up/Prep
April 20		7th-12th Youth Serve Easter Breakfast
April 25-27	Twin Cities	Confirmation Retreat
April 27		Deadline to Notify Immanuel of GLLM Camp Registration

Pastor - from page 3

him go. The cross, separation, loneliness, even death --- nothing could separate Christ from him --- that was the resurrection good news that renewed Thomas.

Jesus meets Thomas and all his doubts --- with love, forgiveness, and grace. Jesus does not chastise Thomas for doubting, he simply meets his doubts and brings the Living God into them – and then blesses those who believe without seeing.

How about you? Is it possible that Jesus hears your doubts, as well -- -and then rushes to -You?

God hears your questions about how prayer works, and the Living God of this world shows up to bring you himself when you pray. When you are scared, lonely, angry, or full of sorrow --- the Living God hears you and COMES. The Living God comes into your home, your workplace, your very life and the presence of the Risen Christ meets your doubts and questions with His love, mercy, and grace.

God's knowledge and pain of the cross ---- understands your doubts, questions, fears, worries, and sorrows better than even you do. The God of the cross meets you in your doubts --- and then brings the surprising good news of the empty tomb. God who knows suffering and pain meets your pain and questioning with His love and comfort, strength and hope. Then He raises you from death to new life.

In light of the good news that Christ is risen, I told Bella that I thought God asked the same question and felt the same way. God doesn't like death anymore than we do --- and that's precisely why he destroys it. That's exactly why there is Easter. Pain, sorrow, sin, injuries, cancer, suffering --- even death --- God destroyed and still destroys them all through the Risen, Living Jesus Christ, who meets us here and now in our doubts and in our faith...

This month – we journey to the good news of the cross and empty tomb and prepare to proclaim and shout: “Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed!” May we cling to the resurrection good news, as God meets each of us in our joys and challenges and in our faith and in our doubts. May God rush in to uplift us and carry us, so we too might proclaim, “My Lord and My God!”

*Blessings on the Journey,
Pastor Christa*

confirmation Notes/Classes

Confirmation students: remember your yearly requirement of sermon notes (20), service hours (25), & activity points (4).

Regular confirmation classes will meet April 6 & 13. No class Easter Sunday 4/20 or 4/27 because of the Confirmation Retreat.

LENT MENTOR MINISTRY: 4/2 and 4/9, students should worship with mentors and then have 1x1 time for discussion. This is a great time for faith growth.

Other Important Dates:

April 25-27 - **SAVE THE DATE!** All-Confirmation Twin Cities Retreat. This is required for all confirmation students. More information about departure and return times will be coming soon.

2014 GRADUATES

If you are graduating from high school this year, please submit a graduation photo to the church office for our graduation bulletin board. Also, please write a few sentences about your future plans, including the following:

- Full name**
- Parents' names**
- Name of college you will attend** (if applicable)
- Intended major or course of study**
- Place of employment** (if entering the work force)
- Any other future plans you may pursue**

****Please submit this information by April 27 so that we can include your photo in the Outreach. Grads will be honored at Immanuel May 18.**

FEBRUARY OFFERING

General Fund

First Sunday	.....\$2864.00
Second Sunday	.....1805.00
Third Sunday	.....4329.00
Fourth Sunday	.....1360.00
Total	.....\$10,359.00

Building Fund

First Sunday	.....\$70.00
Second Sunday	.....0.00
Third Sunday	.....75.00
Fourth Sunday	.....0.00
Total	.....\$145.00

Organ Replacement Project

First Sunday	.....\$40.00
Second Sunday	.....0.00
Third Sunday	.....70.00
Fourth Sunday	.....15.00
Total	.....\$125.00

Per Sunday

Average Attendance (per Sunday)	.....88
Avg. General Giving (per service)	...\$2590.00
Avg. Building Fund Giving (per service)	.\$36.00

Offering Needed

Per Sunday	.....\$3417.00
Per Month\$14,807.00

Income for 2014 (excluding Organ Project)

Thru February\$19,406.00
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2014 Total Budget\$177,685.00

**please note that these figures do not reflect all financial transactions*

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Dec. 23, 2013 - Mar. 19, 2014

In Memory of Gloria Anderson

To Sunday School\$30.00

In Memory of Doris Berscheid

To Organ Fund\$20.00
 To General Fund\$80.00
 To Organ Fund\$25.00

In Memory of Aunt Sylvia

To Organ Fund\$20.00

In Memory of Suzanne Hedtke

To Courtyard Flowers\$20.00

In Memory of Joe Ferrian

To Organ Fund\$20.00

In Memory of Bernice Slinden

To Donna Grahn Scholarship\$10.00

*Please read these memorials over carefully and let the church office know if there are any additions or corrections. Please note that there may be more memorials that have not yet been received in the church office at this time.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY

will be

Sunday, May 18,

New Member Orientation

is May 4 at 10:45 a.m.

SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINES

The Donna Grahn Memorial Scholarship, Martin Anderson Family Memorial Scholarship, Broman Scholarship, and Marv Otto Memorial Scholarship applications are available in the church office and must be submitted to Immanuel Lutheran Church no later than May 1, 2014. Scholarships will be awarded in early August.

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN DUE DATE FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS. APPLICATIONS ARE NOW DUE IN MAY INSTEAD OF JULY! SCHOLARSHIP WILL BE AWARDED LATE MAY/EARLY JUNE.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - March 16, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Harold Eisenbacher, Pastor Christa, Chuck Stranberg, Dean Nelson, Jaylen Rossell, Pat Walsh, Robin Johnson, and Jacklyn Frericks.

Meeting called to order by Chuck Stranberg, Devotions led by Pastor Christa. Minutes of the last meeting approved. Treasurer's Report accepted subject to audit.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Scholarship Committee - Applications will be available in the church office 4/1/14 and due 5/1/14.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS: Full reports, if available, can be found in the Church Office.

Christian Education: 1st communion Sunday will be moved to a later date because of schedule conflict for families.

Building/Property: No report.

Finance/Stewardship: No report.

Worship & Music: No report. Easter services will be at 6:30 a.m. and 9 a.m.

Evangelism/Faith in Action:

PASTOR'S REPORT: Full report is available in the Church Office.

1. Lent has been a blessing. It was great to partner with Bethlehem and Pastor Grant. Thanks to confirmation mentors.
2. Middle school/high school ski trip was a blessing - students loved it!
3. Family Promise: Pastor asked all council members to read packet and strongly consider partnering with Family Promise of Kandiyohi County. Family Promise is a ministry that works with homeless families to provide stability, housing, and long term housing for families through host churches and support churches.

OTHER COUNCIL BUSINESS: None.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Robin Johnson, Secretary**

WEATHER-RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the event that Immanuel's worship services are cancelled, Q102 (102.5FM)/KWLM (1340AM) radio in Willmar will be where the cancellation is announced. You can also check "Operation Snow Desk" at www.yourq102.com

Council & Ministry Team Schedule

Council Meets: April 16, 7 p.m.

Devotions: TBD

Worship & Music: TBD

Christian Ed.: Sun., April 6, 11:30 a.m.

Finance/Stewardship: TBD*

Property: TBD*

Evangelism/Faith in Action:

Sun. April 13 - 11:30 a.m.

*Team Leaders, please notify the church office of your monthly meeting date and time so that information can be included in the Outreach.

WORSHIP SERVICE BROADCAST TIMES

Our Sunday Worship is broadcast on Channel #8 every Monday evening at 7:00 p.m.

If you have a special request for a church service broadcast, please call 320.974.3388.

SOUTH AFRICA VISITORS:

February 17-March 9th - our Lakeland Conference area churches had three visitors from our sister conference in South Africa. The Umpengeni circuit is our sister conference where pastors often serve ten congregations at a time, making the need for lay leadership, preaching, and worship leadership a necessity.

February 25th, thank you to the Bethlehem Lutheran women, who invited us to a Friendship Dinner. At the dinner, Kaliswa (in some of her native dress) shared about Women's and young adult ministry.

March 1-2, Mongoleni Caiphas Ntenga (Caiphas) visited Atwater and Immanuel. Thanks to Roger and Jo Holm for hosting Caiphas. Additional thanks to Harlan and Julie Madsen and Janelle and Harold Eisenbacher for giving Caiphas a tour of their family farm (on a -13 degree day) and warming us up with hot cocoa.

Sunday, March 2nd, Caiphas joined us in worship. He sang Jesus Loves Me in Zulu to our Sunday School kids and shared in worship. During worship, he shared his enthusiasm for God and deep faith, he also commented on the crazy cold and snow, and how moved he was to be here. It was a great gift and blessing to have him with us. We gave Caiphas many holding crosses to share with his family and congregation, and Pastor Christa gave him a holding cross necklace and her "Children of The World" stoll for Caiphas' pastor.



Caiphas with Roger & Jo Holm.



Caiphas at Madsen Dairy with Harlan Madsen.



Caiphas Pastor Christa, Jon, Marcus, and Jennica.



Kaliswa at the Friendship Dinner at Bethlehem.

CONFIRMATION SKI TRIP TO BIWABIK

Some of our Confirmation kids travelled up north in February and stayed at Gethsamane Lutheran Church in Virginia, MN, Friday night, skied Saturday, then drove back and spent the night at Immanuel.

They took part in an experiential worship at Gethsamane and placed their 'burdens' on the cross and received a promise rock before heading back home. About 25 kids in grades 8-12, from Gethsamane and Immanuel, stayed at the host church.



FROM OUR MISSIONARIES

February 27, 2014

Dear Friends and Supporters:

Grace and Peace to you all in the name of Christ. In this newsletter we would like to share with you the background of one of our newest pastors with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Japan (JELC). His name is Rev. Yoshihiko Ito. He was ordained in March of 2013 and has been serving as the sole pastor in our Lutheran church in Hiroshima.

Before introducing him we would like you to know that we will once again be in the States this coming summer. Hopefully in just another day or two we will get a letter off to you all to let you know details of that.

REV. YOSHIHIKO ITO (We will call him Yoshi for short)

Yoshi is currently 48 years old and he came to the seminary 5 years ago to begin his theological education and then to start his second career as a pastor. He grew up in a Christian home and his family participated in worship at an independent church with no affiliation with a particular denomination. He has three younger sisters. At age 18 he expressed his faith in Christ and was baptized.

He went to a university that specialized in electronics and upon finishing up his education he was hired by Sony and worked there for twenty-four years. At the age of 21 he had a good friend who committed suicide and that had a very big influence over him. He thought about that for a long time. As a Christian he realized he had the gift of faith that brought along a sense of hope. That was something his friend never had. The suicide experience got him started thinking about the possibility of being an evangelist. However he continued to work at Sony.

When Yoshi was 27 he met his wife in Korea and they got married. Her family was also Christian, so they were able to share their faith within the marriage. Since they were unable to have children they adopted their daughter who is now 14 years old. Adoption is still relatively rare in Japan. In his 30s Yoshi took a correspondence course about Christianity and the desire to become either an evangelist or a pastor grew stronger. He learned many things and discovered that both Luther and Calvin and their thinking really fit him. At age 44 he felt the call from God to pursue his dream of being a pastor and entered the Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary where Jim teaches. In 2013 he was ordained and is now serving the Lutheran Church in Hiroshima. The church has a home page (in Japanese) if you care to see some pictures of Yoshihiko and his church. <http://www.jelc-hiroshima.jp/index.html>

Hiroshima church is one of our larger and stronger churches here in Japan. Not only was Yoshi a very good student, but he is doing excellent work now as a pastor. Please remember Rev. Yoshihiko Ito, his family and his church in Hiroshima.

In the fall Jim was asked to go preach and give a lecture about spirituality at his church.

**God's richest blessings over each and every one of you,
Jim and Carol Sack
Tokyo, Japan**

PS: There is a new interactive map of mission and support at the following: www.ELCA.org/map.



BARKER FAMILY RELATIVES

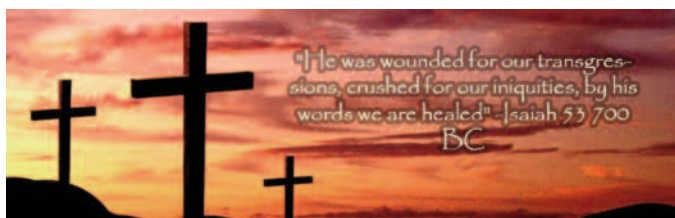
Immanuel had visitors March 16 who were distant relatives of the Barker family that purchased one of the stained glass windows in Immanuel's sanctuary. The visitors from Maryland are visiting churches in the area that have a connection to their ancestors. They had a tour of our building, paged through Immanuel's history book, and looked at old confirmation pics and were able to find some or their relatives in the old photos.

Thanks to Mike Bolton and Barb Everson for helping to answer questions and show our guests around!



Thumbs-Up, Taylor!

We are glad you are home from the hospital and feeling better! Keep healing!



DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Bryon Schroeder

Thoughts and prayers go out to Blake Schroeder and family. Blake's brother, Bryon, passed away March 8, and his funeral was March 13 in Hayward, WI. Blake is also mourning the recent loss of his uncle.

Zach Junkermeier

Thoughts and prayers go out to the family and friends of Zach Junkermeier. Zach was a senior at ACGC high school and passed away March 11. His funeral was March 18 at the ACGC Senior High School.

Vicky Mueller

Thoughts and prayers go out to Tanya (Dengerud) & Jesse Meyer and family. Tanya's mother, Vicky, passed away February 26, and her funeral was March 3 at Immanuel.

May God bring comfort and peace to these families during this time of grief.



SAVED By Grace, CALLED To Serve.

*Please remember to notify the church office of any corrections that should be made to birthdays, anniversaries, names, addresses, etc., so we can keep our files updated.
Thanks!*



- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--|
| 4-1 | Lynne Grahn
Crystal Gomez | 4-18 | Chris Buisman |
| 4-2 | Ryan Peterson | 4-19 | Kathy Nelson
Ashley Rialson |
| 4-4 | Benjamin Walley | | Kendra Bengtson |
| 4-5 | Joshua Bergstrom
Hunter Narragon
Logan Krug | 4-21 | Betty Sokolosky
Mikayla Holm |
| 4-6 | Michael Bolton | 4-22 | Shirley Wallin
Troy Everson |
| 4-7 | Logan Straumann
Malia Rosenquist | | Derek Kragenbring
Elisa Burns |
| 4-8 | Larry Stranberg
Debra Mickle
Russell Peterson
Heather Mueller | 4-24 | Grady Kragenbring |
| 4-11 | Rebecca Nelson
Kate Burns | 4-25 | Kay Bomstad
Jodi Tanata
Scott Goehring |
| 4-13 | Lissa Borchert | 4-27 | Angie Koplín
Jennica Forsythe
Karen Peterson |
| 4-14 | Kayla Bergstrom
Mark Pirsig
Jenna Hoekstra | 4-29 | Mark Johnson
Jane Hovey
Holly Christensen |
| 4-15 | Gerry Passmore | 4-30 | Jordan Tanata |
| 4-17 | Jenna Peterson | | |

HOMEBOUND LIST

Please remember these homebound people with a visit, a card, or a special prayer to bring a little added sunshine into their lives.

Mark S. Berscheid
Sunnyview Room #1
316 Sunrise Lane
P.O. Box 686
Atwater, MN 56209



Lucille Carlson
Bethesda Heritage
1012 3rd St. SE
Room 360
Willmar, MN 56201

Robert & Darlene Kirk
20277 105th Ave. SE
Atwater, MN 56209

Blanche Hoepner
Sunnyview
316 Sunrise Lane
P.O. Box 686
Atwater, MN 56209

Grace Peterson
Emmaus
Room 315
200 N. Holcombe
Litchfield, MN 55355

Bill Hutchinson
Bethesda Heritage
Room 322B
1012 3rd St.
Willmar, MN 56201

Rocile Sokolosky
322 Sunrise Lane
Atwater, MN 56209
974-8217

Chet Johnson
Room 106
Emmanuel Home
Litchfield, MN 55355

Dennis Wallin
441 Williams Ave. E.
Apt. 207
Dassel, MN 55325

Celebrating April Anniversaries...

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 4-10 | Gayla Fontaine
& Dan Herdina |
| 4-15 | John & Tracey
Kalkbrenner |
| 4-25 | Glenn & Betty
Stranberg |
| 4-29 | Lee & Corina Burns |
| 4-30 | Roger & Robin Johnson |



April Assisting Schedule

Ushers Chuck & Jean Stranberg

Communion Assistants

Apr 6 Sharon Cramlet
20 Shane Hagstrom 6:30 a.m.
20 Shane Hagstrom 9 a.m.
John Hagstrom 9 a.m.
Connie Halvorson 9 a.m.
27 Melissa Rossell

Lectors

Apr 6 Chuck Stranberg
13 Denise Kragebring
20 Veda Stockland 6:30 a.m.
20 Brent Garberich 9 a.m.
27 Deb Mickle

Greeters

Apr 6 John & Carla Hagstrom
13 Pat & Sandy Walsh
20 Deb & Lee Mickle 6:30 a.m.
20 Roger & Jo Holm 9 a.m.
27 Katey & Jason Rosenquist

Acolytes

Apr 6 Kobe Holtz
13 Alexandra Hovey
20 Gabby Lawver 6:30 a.m.
20 Emily Naber 9 a.m.
27 Jeremy Nelson

Altar Guild

Lee & Deb Mickle

Offering Counter

TBD

Coffee Hour Servers

Apr 6 Don & Kristine Anderson
Kathy Nelson, Joan Nelson
13 John & Carla Hagstrom
Pat Heining
20 EASTER BREAKFAST
27 Shane Hagstrom
JJ & Kristin Straumann

May Assisting Schedule

Ushers Larry & Sheryl Stranberg

Communion Assistants

May 4 Sandy Walsh
25 John Hagstrom

Lectors

May 4 Veda Stockland
11 Linda Burns
18 Denise Kragebring
25 Larry Stranberg

Greeters

May 4 Darleen Hovey
11 Elaine & Bruce Wothe
18 Pat Fluck
25 Doris Thompson

Acolytes

May 4 Kiara Rosenquist
11 Taylor Bengtson
18 Gabriel Eisenbacher
25 Marie Chalupsky

Altar Guild

Robin Johnson & Rolayne Beerman

Offering Counter

TBD

Coffee Hour Servers

May 4 Jeff & Leslie Blom
Tony & Suzi Holtz
11 Wesley & Carol Bosch
Sandy Edwards
18 Roger & Janet Rossell
Kate & Trevor Berger
25 Jon & Christa Forsythe
Melissa Litzau