



April 2023 Volume 1, Issue 4



Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA  
631 Grand Street, Allegan, MI



# April Activities

**Mandala Group will meet on Saturday, April 8th at 1:00pm in the bible study room.**

**Hearts and Hands will meet on Monday, April 10th at 1:00pm.**

**Bible and Brew also meets on Monday, April 10th at 6:00pm in Hamilton.**

**Coffee for Vets will be held on Tuesday, April 11th from 9:00-11:00am. All veterans and active duty personnel are welcome to attend.**

**Bible Study meets every Wednesday morning at 10:00am.**

**Restaurant of the Month will be held on Saturday, April 15th at 5:30pm at the Club Car Restaurant on D Avenue West in Alamo Township. Sign-up list is on the round table.**

**The Church Council meets on Monday evening, April 17th at 6:30pm.**

**Book Group meets on Monday, April 24th at 1:00pm at either the home of Lorraine Piirtola or here at church. Location will be announced on Sunday the 16th. The book selection for the month is entitled "Bittersweet" by Susan Cain.**

**There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for the children immediately following the Worship Service on Easter morning. If you would like to donate a bag(s) of candy toward the activity, please deposit your donation in the box located on the top of the round table.**

**A Spring Clean-up Work Day has been scheduled for Saturday, April 29th, beginning at 9am. In the event of inclement weather that day, outside clean-up will be rescheduled for Saturday, May 6th at the same time.**

## **Holy Week Worship Schedule:**

**Maundy Thursday - Service will be held at 7pm at Allegan United Methodist Church**

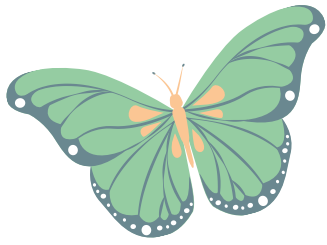
**Good Friday - Stations of the Cross at Immanuel , beginning at 1pm**

**- Good Friday Tenebrae Service at Immanuel at 7pm**

**Easter Breakfast will be served between 8:30-9:30am - Easter Sunday**

**Worship Service will begin at 10:00am**

# Happy April Birthday to



Harold Steffey - April 21

Dawn Doornhaag - April 25

Ken Kinsey - April 26

Jim Combs - April 28

Jessica Cronkhite - April 29

Jeremy Combs - April 30



## We are dividing the Lenten Offering this year:

1/2 will go to the Blessing Box and 1/2 will go to the "Bad Debt" line of Grand Ravine's budget.

When a resident struggles to pay his or her rent, he/she works out a payment plan with Anna; because that person is behind on his or her rent, it goes on the budget as "bad debt." We will help to pay off that line item.

# Worship Volunteers for April

## April 2

Assistant - Jim Horwath  
Reader - Linda Havens  
Flowers - Pam Hopkins

## April 9 - Easter Sunday

Assistant - Donna Preisler  
Reader - Joyce Davis  
Greeters - Jim and Marie Combs  
Flowers

## April 16

Assistant - Joyce Davis  
Reader - Michele Radke  
Flowers - Bobbe DeVries

## April 23

Assistant - Mike Fusillo  
Reader - Ken Kingsbury  
Greeters - Jim and Marie Combs  
Flowers - Keith and Linda Scott

## April 30

Assistant - Pam Hopkins  
Reader - Pam Hopkins  
Flowers -



If there is anyone who would like to serve as a Reader, Assistant or Greeter, please see Pastor Chris or Pam Hopkins.

# Pastor's Page - April 2023

*Then the people as a whole answered, "His blood be on us and our children!"*

Matthew 27:25

*I shall give you my sincere advice:*

*First, to set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn, so that no one will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians, and do not condone or knowingly tolerate such public lying, cursing, and blaspheming of his Son and of his Christians. ...*

*Second, I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed. ...*

*Third, I advise that all their prayer books and Talmudic writings, in which such idolatry, lies, curses, and blasphemy are taught, be taken from them. ...*

*Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb. ...*

*Fifth, I advise that safe conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews.*

- Martin Luther "On Jews and Their Lies," from ***Luther's Works, Volume 47: The Christian in Society IV, pages 268-269.***

I am writing this article on this uplifting topic for two reasons: (1) It came up in Bible Study, and (2) the quotation above is from Matthew, and we hear in worship during Holy Week every three years.

There is so much I could say about this that I have written and rewritten this article several times. For the sake of simplicity and brevity, I only list my points:

1. Jesus tells us not to hate people (Matthew 6:43-45, Luke 6:27-31). Rather, Jesus tells us love our neighbor and then expands our definition of "neighbor" (Luke 10:25-37). This is the most important point - it's fundamental to the Christian faith and life - even though I think it is (or should be) the most obvious.
2. Still, Christians have missed #1. Often. For 2,000 years. Clearly, Luther missed the point. (Reading the above quotation makes me ill.) The Nazis used these words of Luther's *even though most Lutherans and most Germans appear to have forgotten about it*. Modern Lutherans renounce these words.
3. Sometimes, the authors of the New Testament talk about Jesus or the apostles as though they were not Jews (John 9:18, Acts 13:5, etc. - or at least, that's how we read them.) But that's simply not the case, as Matthew and Luke go out of their way to demonstrate (Matthew 1:1-18 and Luke 3:23-38) *even John knows* (John 4:9,22.)
4. The Jews are God's chosen people (Genesis 12:1-3, Romans 9:4-5, 11:26-29) and salvation comes from the Jews (Jesus says so himself, John 4:22.)

# Pastor's Page - Continued

5. The Jews of the Bible are not the Jews of today. The ancient Israelites were different from Jews of the New Testament, both of them are different from the Jews today, just as we are not the same as the earliest Christians. 2,000+ years of history will do that.

6. *Even if the Jews were our enemies - which they are not - we should love them because Jesus tells us to love our enemies.*

7. Sometimes, we Christians can learn things from our Jewish neighbors about Scripture - yes, even the New Testament.

8. There are times when the Testament says (or appears to say) harsh things about Jews (Matthew 27:25 [above], Revelation 2:9.) For example, in the above quotation from Matthew, we have often read that as Jesus' blood being on the Jews. But I don't read it that way; I read us as "the people as a whole" which means that Jesus' blood is on us, not on Jews. This is all over the New Testament (John 1:29 & 3:16-17, Romans 5:6-21, Ephesians 2:11-22, etc.) Our Good Friday hymns would seem to agree; for example, in "Ah Holy Jesus" (LBW 123), we sing in verse 2 "Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee? Alas, my treason, Jesus hath undone thee. 'Twas I Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee; I crucified thee."

So, to recap:

1. Luther was wrong, and the Nazis were wrong to use Luther to support their antisemitism.
2. The Bible was written by Jews, who are not the same as Jews today.
3. Jesus tells us to love our neighbors - this includes our Jewish neighbors.
4. *We* put Jesus on the cross - he died *for us*.

If you have questions about *any of this*, please don't hesitate to ask me. (Yes, this was the short version.

SDG,

Pastor Chris

Luther Quotation of the Month:

*When we are inclined to boast of our position we should remember that we are but Gentiles, while the Jews are of the lineage of Christ. We are aliens and in-laws; they are blood relatives, cousins, and brothers of our Lord. Therefore, if one is to boast of flesh and blood, the Jews are actually nearer to Christ than we are, as St. Paul says in Romans 9[:5]. God has also demonstrated this by his*



## Luther's Quotation-Continued

*acts, for to no nation among the Gentiles has he granted so high an honor as he has to the Jews. For from among the Gentiles there have been raised up no patriarchs, no apostles, no prophets, indeed very few genuine Christians either. And although the gospel has been proclaimed to all the world, yet He committed the Holy Scriptures, that is, the law and the prophets, to no nation except the Jews.*

- Martin Luther, "That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew," *Luther's Works, Volume 25: The Christian in Society II*, page 201.

## Church History Project

We have started the research for the Church History Project and would appreciate your help. If you are able to share any old photos, documents, and/or stories of significance to the history and mission of Immanuel, I would greatly appreciate hearing from you. Please contact Ken Kingsbury at (269)355-5873 or [ken.kingsbury@hughes.net](mailto:ken.kingsbury@hughes.net). Thank you for your help.

## Pastor Chris' Upcoming Schedule

Pastor Chris will be on vacation 10-17 April (but I still intend to be at the council meeting on 17 April.) He will be in the Louisville, KY area. Pastor Julia Humenik will provide pastoral care coverage and Pastor Jim Foster will preach on Sunday, April 16th.

He will be teaching chaplains at Fort Jackson 30 April-13 May. Pastor Jim Foster will be preaching again on Sunday, 30 April and Sunday, 7 May. Again Pastor Julia Humenik will be providing pastoral care coverage.

There will be no adult Sunday School after worship on Easter (9 April) or the next Sunday, 16 April. There will also be no adult Sunday School on 30 April or 7 May.

He would also like to thank you so much for your flower orders. They give glory to God by beautifying our sanctuary on Easter. Anyone who would like to donate their flowers to Grand Ravine is welcome to leave their flowers on the altar and Pastor Chris will take them down the hill after worship on Easter.

## From our Faith Community Nurse

On Sunday, March 19th the Sunday School children in attendance painted about a dozen rocks. On Sunday, March 26th those in attendance decorated the dry painted rocks. Luckily extra rocks were painted on the 19th because we had more decorators than we did painters. The children love painting the rocks. It actually was their suggestion of what we should do for Easter gifts after painting the rocks. As you can see in the photos they were very focused on their creations. And they shared supplies well. One of the lessons on the 26th was sharing joy and Ursula was able to share some of the "thank you" the class has received from their previous gifts. I will be delivering them before Easter.....Maryann Fusillo, RN

In my most recent visit with Sandy, she shared that it makes her feel cared about when people from her church visit. So, if you have the time and want to spread a little joy, visit Sandy at the Allegan County Medical Care Community....Maryann

