



APRIL 2024

SPRING



Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan

UPCOMING EVENTS

Quilting Group meets every Tuesday in the Quilting Room at 9am.

Bible Study Group meets every Wednesday at 10am

Praise Team Practice meets every Wednesday at 4pm.

Mandala Group will meet Monday April 8th at 1pm in the Bible Study Room

Bible and Brew will meet at the Trestle Stop in Hamilton on Monday April 8th at 6pm.

Coffee for Vets will meet in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday April 9th at 9am.

Hope Lutheran will host a Benefit Soup Supper Wednesday April 10th from 5pm to 7pm. The proceeds go to fund the *Christian Neighbors* mission. Those that wish to donate salads and desserts may bring them to Immanuel by 3pm or Hope Lutheran by 4pm. There is a signup sheet on the round table.

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING to discuss the repair of the windows will meet immediately after the worship service on Sunday April 14th.

Church Council will meet Monday April 15th at 6:30pm.

Dinner Nite Out will be Saturday April 20th at 5:30pm. This month we will meet at the University Roadhouse, 1332 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo. A signup sheet is on the round table.

EVENTS CONTINUED:

Book Club will meet Monday April 22nd at 1pm

Temple B'nai Israel and the Congregation of Moses will host a joint Passover Seder on Tuesday April 23. More specific information will be forthcoming and there will be a signup sheet on the table.

Save this Date: We are planning to attend the White Caps Game on Saturday August 24th at 7pm. Please reserve your seat now by signing up at the Round Table. Tickets are \$16 each.

Pastor Chris will be on vacation Monday April 1st through Sunday April 7th. Pastor Jim Foster will lead us in worship Sunday April 7th. Pastor Chris will then be at the ELCA Chaplain Training Monday April 8th through Friday April 12th. For Pastoral Emergencies please contact Pastor Nicole Smith during the first week (April 1-7) and Pastor Julia Humenik during the second week (April 8-12). If you need their contact information, please ask Sandie Horwath or Ken Kingsbury. Pastor Chris will return for worship on Sunday April 14th.

We are working to bring everything up-to-date on the church web page and suggest you check the **calendar** button for any updates. That link is: (immanuellutheranallegan.org).

The Adult Study Group will not meet Sunday March 31st (Easter Sunday), Sunday April 7th (Pastor on vacation), or Sunday April 14th (Congregational Meeting). We will resume Sunday April 21st.

The Student Baccalaureate Committee asks Immanuel Lutheran Church if we would provide cookies for the Baccalaureate on Sunday, May 19th at 3pm again this year. They request chocolate chip and Pastor requests oatmeal scotchies.

Future Events: Rummage Sale May 17-18 and Graduation Party for Maribella Armourillo June 8th.



Jeff Hopkins - April 3
Carter Vance - April 17
Harold Steffey - April 21
Dawn Doornhaag - April 25
Ken Kinsey - April 26
Jim Combs - April 28
Jessie Cronkhite - April 29
Jeremy Combs - April 30



WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR APRIL

April 7

Assistant - Jim Horwath
Reader - Linda Havens
Counters - Laura Compton & Linda Scott
Flowers - Rogers Family
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

April 14

Assistant - Donna Preisler
Reader - Linda Scott
Counters - Joyce Davis & Mike Aksamit
Flowers - Open
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

April 21

Assistant - Joyce Davis
Reader - Michele Radke
Counters - Laura Compton & Linda Scott
Flowers - Dawn Doornhaag
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

April 28

Assistant - Mike Fusillo
Reader - Ken Kingsbury
Counters - Joyce Davis & Jim Combs
Flowers - Linda Scott
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

The flower sign up sheet is on the round table. A single vase is \$16 or both are \$32. Check it out and reserve your flowers today.

We encourage you to serve as a Reader, Worship Assistant, Counter, or Greeter. If you are interested, please talk to Pastor Chris or Ken Kingsbury.

PASTOR'S PAGE

Pastor's Page, April 2024 (*This month's pastor's page is the first half of my Easter sermon, so it doesn't have an ending, it just ends...*)

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 6:23

In his November 2023 Bishop's Newsletter article, Bishop Satterlee made this claim:

I regularly conversed with people who challenged the gospel because they considered death natural, even necessary, for humanity and the planet to evolve. COVID-19 changed that perspective as Death became personal, powerful, pervasive, and, for a time, completely out of our control.

He has made similar claims in other times and places: we used to be able to deny death, but COVID-19 changed our perspective and now we cannot (he's on sabbatical as I write this, so I won't contact him so that he can defend or speak for himself).

I disagree. Best I can tell, we live in a death-denying culture. We want to live forever and we want to be fully able-bodied and good-looking (young) while we do it. We wanted this in 2019 and we want it in 2024. We honestly believe (and I use that word intentionally) that our science and our medicine will make it possible – and for many of us, we survive diseases that would have killed us just a generation or two ago.

This is why we, as a society, can pretend like Death isn't real. (Caveat: parts of our society act like Death is all around us – when it suits their purposes – but that isn't the norm.)

I agree with Bishop Satterlee, however, in that Death becomes personal for all of us, eventually. Most of us aren't involved in mass shootings, but most of us have been impacted by, say, cancer. Or a long, slow illness. Or a tragic accident. Or ... well, you get the point.

For myself, as a military service member and clergy, I am faced with Death regularly. Sometimes it's tragic, sometimes it's a relief. I've buried people younger than me and I've buried people who have suffered the whole time I've known them. It's been my duty to tell families that their loved ones died in uniform. I've had my will and funeral service planned for more than 12 years.

PASTOR'S PAGE CONTINUED

But I know that most people don't like thinking about, or even acknowledging, Death, because when I talk about it and my approach to it (and my own mortality), folks tend to react negatively. Surprisingly few people, even people who could well afford it, have life insurance policies or wills.

Death is a reality, and we can (and do) try to deny it, individually and culturally. But there are glimpses, even in the culture, that it's always around the proverbial corner; whether it's Tim McGraw's "Live like You Were Dying" or Nickelback's "If Today Was Your Last Day," it seems to be inborn: we will all die.

Scripture, and all people everywhere before about 100 years ago, knew that Death was an ever-present reality, and they lived in constant fear of it. It's how rulers ruled – you stepped out of line, you die. "But if you do not worship [the image of my god], you shall immediately be thrown into a furnace of blazing fire, and who is the god that will deliver you out of my hands?" asks King Nebuchadnezzar to the three young men who worship only the LORD.

The Apostle Paul, like everyone else, was well acquainted with Death. "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" he asks in Romans 7:24.

SDG,

Pr. Chris





CHLOE ANN COMPTON



A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

By Keith Scott

I had what was, undoubtedly, a brush with death. That end was not to be; instead I experienced a renewal. It's that renewal that I'd like to recount here. What should have been the finale turned out to be an experience of joy and wonder.

For a week while I hovered on the brink, I was able to talk with the Lord. Yes, I spoke with Him several times. It wasn't with words that too often can be misunderstood and fail to convey every nuance. It was a more direct communication. Like what you might expect telepathy to be like; maybe it was!

He showed me how much I was loved but gently chided me for my failings. He explained that I still had tasks to complete.

The most important of those tasks is to witness to others the message of His love. Hence this piece I write here. It's a message for those who have already accepted Him as well as for those He will be calling. For all it should be a message of joy.

It is hard to find the right words but, however imperfectly, I hope I can express all that He showed me. I saw a future that I am constrained to share. It was an assurance of the life to come for those who can accept the invitation. I know that I will have a new body; not a corporal one but one of the spirit. I know I will have the joy of reuniting with those I have loved. I know I will learn much more of this wonderful universe than I can ever hope to do in this my corporal existence. This is the knowledge and assurance that I need to share with those who will listen to the Lord's call.

PASTOR PEGGY ADAMS

Pastor Peggy served Immanuel as our Pastor from August 1, 1997 to September 30, 2002. She will be celebrating her 90th birthday on April 10 and her family is planning a small gathering and Card shower. She is currently living in a Care Facility in Texas and suffers from Dementia and Parkinson's disease. We encourage those that remember Pastor Peggy to send her a card to: Rev. Peggy Adams, c/o Margaret Schmucker, 2404 Kristen Lane, Cedar Park, Texas 78613. Thank you.



GLOBAL MISSION



Right now, thanks to support from donors such as you, over 130 ELCA missionaries are at work in 41 countries. These missionaries are meeting the needs of their neighbors as pastors, teachers, health care workers, communicators and more. Most importantly, they are forming the deep relationships that connect us as a global community of faith.

