

OCTOBER 2024



Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



Rick Bierlein - October 6
Tessa Compton - October 25



Gerald & Ursala Armourillo - October 11
Jeremy & Jennifer Vance - October 11
Doug & Tammy Reed - October 19
Michael & Karen Acosta - October 29

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR OCTOBER

October 6

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

October 13

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

October 20

- Reader - Michele Radke
- Assistant - Mike Fusillo
- Counters - Laura Compton & Linda Scott
- Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

October 27

- Reader - Sharon Aksamit
- Assistant - Mike Aksamit
- Counters - Joyce Davis & Jim Combs
- Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

ALTAR FLOWERS: Due to a series of miscommunications, misunderstandings, and disappointments, the congregational council has decided to discontinue our relationship with Allegan Floral; the last Sunday that they will provide flowers will be Sunday, September 29th. For the foreseeable future, we will use artificial floral arrangements. If you would like to provide flowers for use on the altar in honor or memory of a person or event, you are welcome to purchase flowers for the altar (*please coordinate with Shelley Busfield and Ken Kingsbury if you do*).



October 2024, Boundaries, Part 2

Continued from last month...

From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us.

- Paul, Speech at the Areopagus (Mars Hill), Acts 17:26-27 (emphasis mine)

Boundaries allow us to drive on the road safely with other drivers, and boundaries allow us to point to Jesus in word and deed while minimizing the distractions of the world. Remember my example from last month – the pastor who unloaded his marital woes on his parishioner-friends? That pastor and that congregation were very distracted, and their witness to Jesus suffered.

God sets all kinds of boundaries – from Creation to the Ten Commandments, to the land given to the tribes in Joshua, to his order to Jeremiah not to marry, to Jesus' command not to offer up long, pious-sounding prayers in public, to the New Jerusalem, God often says "this far, no farther."

We often push back against boundaries. "Why can't I eat from that ONE TREE when I can eat from all the others?" "Why can't the prophet Ezekiel mourn at the death of his wife?" "Why can't I disfigure my face when I'm fasting?" We want to do what we want to do, and we only want to acknowledge our boundaries – the boundaries we understand or we think are important.

But we also push back when another person or group violates our boundaries. Have you ever been to a worship service in a religious tradition which does not have the same sense of time

to which you're accustomed? The worship service advertises that it starts at 11am, but it really starts whenever the choir is ready to process into the sanctuary, and if you were expecting to be rolling out the parking lot by noon, well ... you are going to miss whatever you *thought* you were going to accomplish next that day. These people aren't *wrong* or *bad*, they just have a different set of expectations (boundaries) when it comes to time in and around worship.

This is why it's best to be as clear as possible about our boundaries whenever we're in a new situation or interacting with new people.

In my first 12 years of ministry, people were forever commenting on how young I was. Folks would say things like "you look like you're 12" or "you're just like my grandson" (I heard that as late of 2019) or "aren't you too young to be a pastor?" Not only were these words not helpful, they were boundary violations. Intern Emma has had very similar experiences, and I ask you to respect her boundary and not ask them of her, as they undermine her ability to lead a congregation, as she in training to do.

Having porous boundaries detracts from our witness to Jesus.

While boundaries are not always fun, they are necessary. God sets boundaries from the very beginning of the Bible (Gen 1:4) and keeps right on setting them through the end of the New Testament (Rev 21:7-8). We have set a few boundaries of our own to keep us safe and our connections strong. It's best to stay inside the lines on the page, so that we communicate clearly and we don't get distracted from the picture we draw that obviously points to Jesus.

SDG,

Pr. Chris



The Sunday school students will assemble this year's LWR health kits during Sunday school on 6 October. We will bless them during worship.

We will bless the quilts on Sunday, 13 October during worship.

Intern Emma Janzen: This year, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Portage has an intern from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA. Originally from the Phoenix area, Intern Emma is in training to be a deacon in the ELCA. As a part of our seminary training, rostered leaders (Ministers of Word and Sacrament, or pastors, and Ministers of Word and Service, or deacons) are required to spend time in a congregation, learning the practical elements of congregational leadership.

Luther Rose: Do you know the Luther Rose? If not, you soon will; it will start appearing in the strangest of places... Martin Luther wrote this about his seal:



There is first to be a cross, black [and placed] in a heart, which should be of its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. For if one believes from the heart he will be justified. ^(Rom 10:10) Even though it is a black cross, [which] mortifies and [which] also should hurt us, yet it leaves the heart in its [natural] color [and] does not ruin nature; that is, [the cross] does not kill but keeps [man] alive. For the just man lives by faith, ^(Rom 1:17) but by faith in the Crucified One. Such a heart is to be in the midst of a white rose, to symbolize that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace; in a word it places the believer into a white joyful rose; for [this faith] does not give peace and joy ^(John 14:27) as the world gives and, therefore, the rose is to be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and of all the angels. Such a rose is to be in a sky-blue field, [symbolizing] that such joy in the Spirit and in faith is a beginning of the future heavenly joy; it is already a part [of faith], and is grasped through hope, even though not yet manifest. And around this field is a golden ring, [symbolizing] that in heaven such blessedness lasts forever and has no end, and in addition is precious beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable and precious metal. (from *Luther's Works*, volume 49, p358-359)

In case you want to send Maribella a card:

Maribella Armourillo
EAST HOLMES 919 E SHAW LN
ROOM # 559
EAST LANSING, MI 48825-3800

Hymns:

On Sunday, 22 September, Lori was gone and was unable to record her playing. I asked three of you in the congregation for your favorite hymn out of the hymnal; that's what we sang that day. If you would like me to have your favorite hymns in reserve, just e-mail, text, or write them down for me and I will keep a list for when Lori is gone again.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Bible Study Group meets every Wednesday at 10am in the Study Room. We discuss the Bible Readings for the upcoming Sunday Worship Service.

Praise Team Practice meets every Wednesday at 4pm.

Coffee for Vets meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and fellowship. If you know of a Vet who might like to participate, please invite them.

BIBLE AND BREW will meet Monday October 14th at the Trestle Stop in Hamilton. We meet at 6pm for a meal, fellowship, and a lively discussion on random questions on a wide variety of subjects. It is a lot of fun and we hope to see you there.

BOOK GROUP will meet Monday October 28th at 1pm to discuss the book chosen for this month. Members of the group suggest and decide on which book they will read for the following month. For October we will discuss *How to Talk With Anyone About Anything* by Harville Hendrix, Ph.D & Helen Lakely Hund Ph.D.

Zumba meets in the Fellowship Hall every Wednesday at 6pm and every Saturday at 10am.

GOD'S GARDEN GROUP: We will be gathering for our final time this year on Tuesday October 8th beginning at 9am. The group has made a big difference in our church landscape this year and we appreciate everyone that has participated. Come and join us.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL meets regularly on the third Monday of the month. This month we meet on Monday, October 21st at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome to sit in on the meetings at any time.

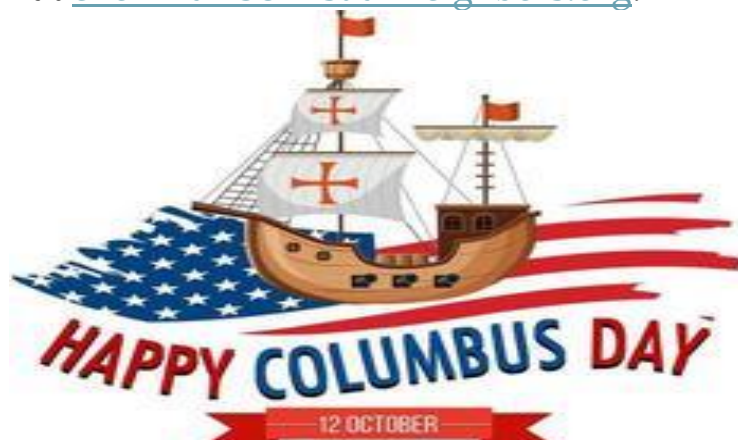
EVENTS CONTINUED:

Dinner Nite Out will be Saturday October 19th at 5:30pm. The hosts for October are Mike and Sharon Aksamit and we will be gathering at *the Roadhouse*. Details and a signup sheet will be on the Round Table. We also need hosts for the upcoming months of November, and December. To be the host means that you will choose the restaurant and let them know the number coming.

HELP FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: The Parent-Teacher conferences are coming up and the school has asked for our help. On Tuesday October 15th if we could bring rolls and cheeses to the church before Noon, we will see that they get to the school by 2:30pm for the conferences. There will be a signup sheet on the Round Table. Thanks everyone.

GRAND RAVINE BRUNCH: Immanuel will be hosting this brunch again on Tuesday October 29th with food, games, and fellowship. Everyone is invited. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get to know our neighbors. We will have more information later.

CHRISTIAN NEIGHBORS LUNCHEON: This will be held at the facility at 282 12th Street in Plainwell (Next to Hope Lutheran Church) on Thursday October 24th from Noon to 1:30pm. The purpose of the luncheon is to familiarize local clergy and church leaders about Christian Neighbors and it's ministry. The luncheon will be catered by River Road Foods and sponsored by LYNX Golf Course. If interested please RSVP by October 17th to Eric Hoffman at ehoffman@christianneighbors.org.





Lutheran World Relief

THE HEALTH KITS will be assembled in the Youth Sunday School on Sunday October 6th and the blessing of the kits will be during worship. **THE BLESSING OF THE QUILTS** will be during worship on Sunday October 13th. Last year we donated 407 quilts in addition to the Personal Care Kits to the LWR and these are distributed among fourteen countries around the world. It should be noted that during this very difficult time that Ukraine is one of those 14 countries. This is but one way in which our congregation shares our love with many others and we thank all those who make this ministry possible.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ends on Sunday October 27th. The idea started back in Roman times as they would adjust their time to make full use of the daylight. DST was first implemented in the United States with the Standard Time Act of 1918 as a wartime measure to conserve energy resources. The current program was made permanent in the winter of 1974.



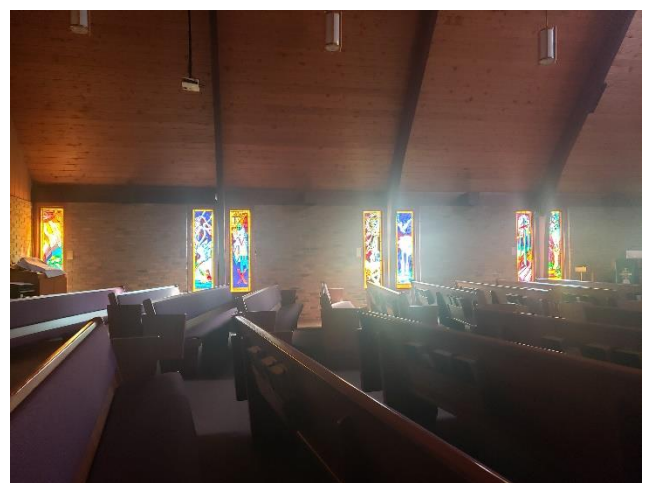
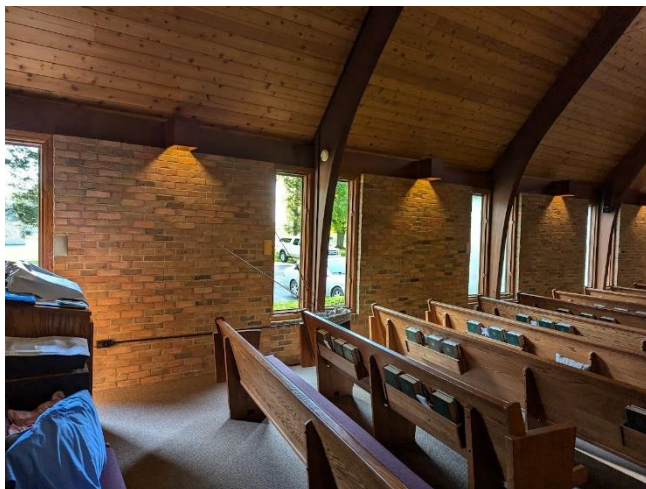
CARTER VANCE is age twelve and a 7th grade student at Hamilton Middle School. Carter is actively involved with the Vocal Performance Class at his school and participates in the school musicals. In the 6th grade Carter played the role of *Willy Wonka* in the Musical – *Willy Wonka Kids*.

He enjoys playing tennis and is a member of the Hamilton Middle School tennis team. He is active in his local 4-H program and loves working with and being around animals. In fact, Carter received Second Place honors at the Allegan County Fair this past month for Showmanship with his rabbit, Peter. There is a photo of his ribbons and Peter on the church website. Way to go Carter!



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

We wish to give a special thanks to Mike Acosta, Sharon Aksamit, Marie Combs, Bill Cronkhite, Jim Horwath, Dick Jones, Lori Querback, Mike Wathen, and Jeremy Vance for removing, cleaning, and replacing the stained-glass windows, as well as other work that needed to be done on the window frames. As we all can see, the finished project is absolutely beautiful. *Job well done everyone.*





ALL HALLOWS DAY (November 1st) dates back to festivals of the church as early as the fourth century. It is a day when Christians would honor all the saints of the church, whether known or unknown. But more specifically, it was a day in which people would honor members of their family that had passed on, in Sunday worship service and in special ceremonies at the gravesite. These graveside rituals would usually include offerings of flowers, candles, and prayers for loved ones at their graves. We often celebrate and honor the saints within our congregation on All Saints Sunday (November 3rd this year) by reading of the names of those within our midst that died during the past year. In many areas the custom of baking and sharing *Soul Cakes* was a personal way to honor a loved one. Groups of the poor (often the children) would go door-to-door collecting these Soul Cakes in exchange for their prayers for the dead (saints). Many see this as the forerunner to our current practice of Trick or Treating. And as they went from door-to-door they would carry lanterns made from hollowed-out turnips called jack-o-lanterns.



Aka **HALLOWEEN** grew out of these customs as the day of All Hallows Eve (the evening before All Saints Day). For many young children, the visit to a cemetery often can be a bit scary. Especially if that visit is late at night (emphasis upon the Eve of). So we conjure up spooky costumes and stories to add the element of scariness to the event. And if the children come to your door asking for a *Soul Cake* and you turn them away empty handed, they just might decide that you deserve some mischief.

We here at Immanuel will once again do our very best to make this All Hallows Eve (Halloween) a special day for the kids in Allegan by hosting our Trunk or Treat on Thursday, October 31st from 5 to 7pm. Weather permitting, we plan to have it in the parking lot with trunks loaded with goodies. However, if the weather is threatening, we will bring it inside. Watch the bulletin for more information on this special event.





REFORMATION DAY: October 31st also holds special meaning to those of us who belong to the Lutheran tradition. It was on this date in 1517 that a young Biblical scholar, Theologian, and parish priest named Martin Luther posted a paper with 95 theses to the doors of All Saints Church in Wittenberg, Germany. This was the traditional way for a local scholar to invite others to discuss the points made in this paper. Pastor Luther was upset

over the current practice of his church (The Roman Catholic Church) of selling *indulgences* which led the people to believe that all they had to do was give the church money and all sins could be forgiven. He heard his people singing the little ditty *When the coin in the coffer rings – The soul from purgatory springs*. Luther wanted to discuss this from a Biblical point of view and thus, hopefully, **REFORM** his church.

There were many others that attempted the same reformation prior to Luther, but he was living in a different world. In 1450 a young man named Johannes Gutenberg created an amazing invention. He invented the printing press with movable type; an invention that has been called *The Invention that changed the World*. It sure did for Luther. Someone took his 95 Theses, translated them into the native German language, and printed several copies for the population to read. And then there was a young man named Christopher Columbus who dared to say that the world was not flat and in 1492 proved his point. And we still celebrate this event on October 14th as Columbus Day.

So, this October 31st we celebrate the 507th anniversary of the Reformation. It is indeed a notable date in the history of our world. And we here at Immanuel will be celebrating it on Sunday, October 27th as part of our worship service. Happy Reformation Day Everyone.

