



NOVEMBER 2024



Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



Susan Ward - November 3
Denny Gorr - November 11
Laura Compton - November 26



Aaron & Laura Rogers - November 23

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR NOVEMBER

November 3

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

November 10

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

November 17

Reader - Sharon Aksamit
Assistant - Mike Fusillo
Counters - Laura Compton & Linda Scott
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

November 24

Reader - Michele Radke
Assistant - Rick bierlein
Counters - Joyce Davis & Jim Combs
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS: We really appreciate everyone that serves during our worship service and would love to have more people involved. If you would like to serve as a reader, worship assistant, counter, or greeter, please talk to Pastor Chris or Ken Kingsbury. We can be reached in the office Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 1pm.





November 2024

Pastor's Page: First Things First

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

- *The First Commandment, Exodus 20:2-3*

Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God.

- *Luther's explanation of the First Commandment, Large Catechism*

This pastor's page should come as no surprise. 😊

Do politics matter? Of course – our politicians make decisions and pass laws that impact our lives.

Your vote matters. There are a lot of reasons I could tell you to vote, but the most pastoral reason I can give: we are called to participate in our democracy for the sake of our neighbor.

But, as your pastor, the Church calls me to remind you of several fundamental Christian truths:

First, God is God and we are not. Whomever we elect, Jesus is still Lord and still loves us and

Second, we worship God, not our politicians. Our politicians do not love and cannot save us. In Christ, God has already done that.

Finally, Christ's return is not up to us. This election will not usher in the Apocalypse. Only God can do that.

So, take a breath – and don't buy into the hype. Pray for our nation. Pray for people who disagree with you. Pray that we do not tear ourselves apart. Pray for our leaders (because we Christians are commanded to do so: 1 Timothy 2:1-4).

We worship God, not politicians. God is in charge, and God loves us and will never leave us.

Now, go vote. Don't stop praying. And leave the rest to God.

Because what I tell the children is true, there's always only one right answer ... 😊

SDG,

Pr. Chris

For [God] says "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

- *Hebrews 13:5b, quoting Deuteronomy 31:6, 8*

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them...

- *Genesis 20:4-5*



A VERY IMPORTANT NOTE:

First, I'm not planning on going anywhere. Things are changing at Immanuel – for the better – and we need to adapt.

In 2021, Trevor led Immanuel to set a goal of being “self-sustaining” within 5 years. He wanted to make sure income exceeded expenses without pulling from savings.

And God gave that to us in under 2 years. I have quoted Trevor as saying that our growth has been miraculous, and everyone agrees that he chose the right word – miraculous. It was important that we celebrate and give thanks to God.

I also told council that Immanuel is not truly self-sustaining. Part-time pastors who do not need insurance are hard to find (at this point, *any* pastor is hard to find), and if I get hit by a bus tomorrow, Immanuel would struggle to find another one.

At this point, let me clarify that *this is not about me*. The Office of Pastor matters. I do not. This is about being realistic about Immanuel's situation.

Also, you had a goal and smashed it. Everything I know about organizations is that we need a new goal now or we will stagnate – or worse.

Council agreed with my reasons (Trevor even quoted my words back at me at one point 😊), and has plotted a new series of goals, including working toward calling a full-time pastor. So your pastor's compensation package is going to increase as you work toward that goal.

While Trevor will discuss the particulars, if my compensation package is going to change by more than 10%, we need to track that change and include the synod office. This is to protect the pastor and the congregation, and to make sure that everyone is on the same page.

I cannot, in good conscience, accept a full-time call as an Army Reserve chaplain. Under this plan, I would retire from the Army around November 2026.

This may come as surprising news. While the council and I had some idea, we did not have all the facts until we met with Bishop Satterlee recently via Zoom. Now that Bishop, council, and I are all on the same page, we are bringing you on board.

Honestly, it was an exciting meeting because it is an exciting time at Immanuel. The bishop expressed how nice it was to have a meeting with a council to talk about how to respond to growth.

If you have any questions, I plan to be home to lead worship on Sunday, 27 October (Reformation Sunday 😊). Any council member should also be able to answer your questions, but if we're all stumped, Pr. Chrisy Bright will lead worship on Sunday, 3 November, and the bishop has promised to keep her posted so that she will definitely be able to answer any question about this process.

We will pray, grow, and plan together at our annual meeting on Sunday, 08 December after worship



NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING: Our annual meeting will be on Sunday, 08 December 2024 after worship. Adult Sunday school is cancelled for that day.

NOTES FROM PASTOR CHRIS:

Thank you so much for the cards and the gift card for Pastor Appreciation Sunday! Not only do I feel very appreciated, I appreciate YOU very much. (And remember: it's all about Jesus... 😊)

If you should be available, Sandy Rankin would very much appreciate a visit.

Pastor will be at the Rock Island Arsenal the second week of November, leaving after Vets Coffee and returning in time for Dinner Night Out. (12-16 November).

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.

One Sunday a month (depending on our schedules), I invite Maryann to the front of the sanctuary during worship (after we distribute communion but before you stand) to bless her communion kit. For Lutherans, lay people from a congregation take Holy Communion to their home-based members as an extension of the congregation's celebration of Holy Communion. It's important to remind all of us of what Maryann is doing on our behalf and to send her with our love and support – and God's blessing.

You may have noticed that we have some wall decorations around the building. They are thank you notes made by the students of North Ward for the backpacks and supplies. I have also posted several thank you notes on our rotating bulletin board.



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 November 11th 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 November 25th 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. Watch the Sunday Bulletin for the announcement of the November selection.

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

THE CHURCH COUNCIL meets regularly on the third Monday of the month. This month we meet on Monday, November 18th at 6:30pm. Everyone is welcome to sit in on the meetings at any time.

Dinner Nite Out will be Saturday November 16th at 5:30pm. The hosts for November are Mike and Maryann Fusillo. We will be gathering at *La Catina* in Pawpaw.. Details and a signup sheet will be on the Round Table. To be the host means that you will choose the restaurant and let them know the number coming.

EVENTS CONTINUED:



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ends on Sunday November 3rd. Sorry for the confusion in last month's newsletter. 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.

PASTOR'S MINI VACATION: Pastor Chris will be in North Carolina November 1st through November 3rd while participating in the wedding for a friend.

ALL COMMITTEE MEETING will be held in the Fellowship Hall on Monday Evening. We will begin with a lite meal at 6pm and then break into the various committees. These meetings are open to everyone, and we urge you to come and participate. We have Education, Worship & Music, Property, Mission & Outreach, and Stewardship & Finance committees meeting.



ELECTION DAY is Tuesday November 5th. It is our right, our privilege, and our responsibility to cast our vote for the people that we choose to lead our government. Vote today!

VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON: Monday November 11th. There is a signup sheet on the Round Table with the details. Please check it out.



PASTOR CHRIS ARMY DUTY: Pastor Chris will be attending the 1st Army Chaplain Corps from Tuesday November 12th through Saturday November 16th.

EVENTS CONTINUED:

HEARTS AND HANDS will meet at the church on Monday November 11th. Due to the fellowship hall being used for the Veterans Luncheon, our meeting will be in the Quilting Room this month.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: We will hold our meeting immediately after the worship service on Sunday, December 8th. *Please* have any and all reports for this meeting in the church office no later than Monday December 2nd. We will prepare the information packets and email them out by Thursday December 5th. If you are not on the church email list and would like an advance copy, please contact Ken Kingsbury in the church office.



THE BOOK GROUP will meet in the fellowship hall on Monday November 25th. This month we will discuss *Created to Dream* by Rick Warren.



CEMETERY - NEW SECTION: The plotting of the new section of our church cemetery is now complete and reservations are now available. There are a total of 577 plots available in the new section and a total of 6 plots still available in the old section. There are brochures in the rack on the Welcome Table for your information. If you have any questions, or need more specific information, please contact the church office.

OFFICE CLOSED: Ken Kingsbury will be visiting family in Texas Thanksgiving week so the church office will be closed from Tuesday November 26th through Saturday November 30th.

A WOUND CARE KIT has been prepared by Maryann Fusillo and is placed in the supply cabinet in the Fellowship Hall restroom.



GOD'S GARDEN

A big thank you to everyone that helped with God's garden during summer and fall. We put in a lot of hours, one hour at a time, but sometimes getting 10 to 12 hours worth of work done each time we gathered. Maybe you brought tools to use, treats to eat afterwards, pulled weeds or put down mulch. Whatever your contribution, every bit of it was appreciated and we look forward to picking up where we left off next year. Thanks to Jim Horwath who lead us each week with tasks to complete and thanks to everyone else for embracing this new way of taking care of our property which is God's Garden!



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Isabelle Horwath is a twelve-year-old student in the sixth grade at L.E. White Middle School. When she isn't busy with sports (such as Cheer Leading, Softball, Tennis, et. al.) she really enjoys crocheting, making jewelry, and crafting. She enjoys selling her creations at the local craft shows and making special gifts for her friends. She is active in the L.E. White Middle School Choir and is looking forward to her first concert in December.

Isabelle has two dogs; Millie (a Sheep-a-doodle) and JJ (a German Shepherd). Her favorite food is Chic-fil-A fries. Her favorite season is Summer because there is NO school and her favorite holiday is Christmas.

