

MAY 2025



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



MAY BIRTHDAYS

Lincoln Vance - May 1
Bill Cronkhite - May 4
Donna Preisler - May 7
Marie Combs - May 8
Mike Fusillo - May 17
Betty Howard - May 18
Nancy Brauer - May 27
Bohdi James Rogers - May 31





MAY ANNIVERSARIES

Dan & Dawn Doornhaag – May 5
Pr. Chris & Pr. Rachael Laughlin – May 23
Trevor & Mallory Horwath – May 26
Denny & Meri Gorr – May 29



WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR MAY

May 4

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

May 11

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

May 18

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

May 25

Reader - Sharon Aksamit
Assistant - Mike Aksamit
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.



Pastor's Page, May 2025: Faith

the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, "The one who is righteous will live by faith."

- Romans 1:17

Faith ... is a divine work in us which changes us and makes us to be born anew of God, ... [it] makes us altogether different, in heart and spirit and mind and powers; and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. O, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done them, and is constantly doing them.

- Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans, *The Annotated Luther, Volume 6: The Interpretation of Scripture*, p469

What is faith?

First, faith is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:9). Faith is not about you – faith in God is from God. The faith of Christ ("Christ's faith") fills us, a gift of the Holy Spirit.

The words "I believe" are not just "knowledge" (that's why "faith" and "knowledge" are different words). *Knowledge is important.* And knowledge is not faith. Or, as James puts it: "Even the demons believe – and shudder." (James 2:19)

In that same section, James says "Faith without works is dead." I would put it differently: faith leads to works. But there's more to it than that:

The word that the New Testament uses for “faith” is πίστις (pistis). This word can also be translated “belief” or “trust.” What might it mean to trust God? How might we act differently – or how might our lives be different – if we really trusted God?

Here’s one possibility:

The world can be – and always has been – a turbulent place. The ancient world experienced famines, plagues, and wars; today, we might call them economic instability, pandemics, and ... well, it’s still war (I write this on my lunch break from Army classes 😞). These have always been sources of anxiety.

For us, when it happens on the other side of the world, we know it minutes later. And our news latches on and tells us about how horrible it is (and might sensationalize / stretch the truth *just a bit*). Seconds later, social media makes it look and sound worse for you and people who think like you (and possibly *less* true).

Then we remember the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:25-26:

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Faith is not just knowledge. Faith is trust. Trust that God loves us and will care for us. Trust that, in loving our neighbor, we love God, who takes care of our neighbor through us. Even when the world is scary. It means that we do not react in fear, because we trust that God will take care of us.

SDG,

Pr. Chris

Notes from Pastor:

Yes, we will have a bake sale to benefit our confirmands on Sunday, 18 May. If you noticed from the last newsletter, the baccalaureate students also request that we donate cookies (as we have the last three years). So, if you make cookies for the bake sale, would you set aside a few for the baccalaureate? I will “put my money where my mouth is” and I will pledge to make cookies and / or a baked good for both this year.



Due to our annual synod assembly being 18 – 20 May with Jim, Sandie, and I as the voting members from Immanuel, we have moved the council meeting to the evening of 21 May. 😊

I just want to take a moment to say “thank you” to everyone who makes things happen at Immanuel, the stuff that happens on the regular to the stuff that happens at random; I won’t remember everyone (and it would probably take several pages), but for now, just a folks who:

- bake the communion bread
- donated candy for the Easter Egg hunt
- stayed (or just donated toward) our last confirmation fundraiser
- donated and / or served at the funeral lunch
- read the readings and pray the prayers / assist at communion each Sunday
- sing in the choir and / or the praise team



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. Watch the Bulletin and the church web page for changes during the holidays.

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 April 14th at the Trestle Stop in Hamilton. We meet at **5:30pm** 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. *Please note the time!*

THE HEARTS AND HANDS GROUP will meet at the church on Monday May 12th at 1pm. If you can crochet or knit, then this group is for you. Items that we create are given out to the community and include baby blankets, slippers, hats, gloves, scarves, and other items. If you have an interest or questions, please see Maryann Fusillo.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL will meet *Wednesday* evening (May 21st) at 6:00pm this month due to a conflict with the Synod Conference. If you are interested in the activities of the congregation or have an issue you would like to have the council consider, you are welcome to attend this meeting.



BOOK GROUP meets on Monday May 26th at 1pm. The book for this month will be chosen at the April meeting. Members of the group suggest and decide on which book they will read for the following month at each meeting. Watch the Sunday Bulletin for the announcement of the monthly selection.

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

Dinner Nite Out will take place Saturday May 17th at 5:30pm. We will be gathering this month at *Joe Shmoe's restaurant* and we would love to see you there. The sign-up sheet is on the Round Table with the particulars. If you would like to host and choose the restaurant please sign-up on the sheet under the event for May..

VACATION TIME: Pastor Chris is still enjoying his vacation and will be returning Saturday May 3rd. I am sure that both he and Pastor Rachael will have some *tall tales* to tell. During this period please contact Pastor Julia Humenik at United Methodist Church if there is a pastoral emergency.

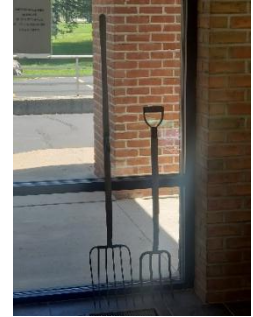


CHURCH ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE: It's time to start setting aside household and clothing items for our annual rummage sale on May 16th. When donating items please ensure that they are clean and in good condition. As much as possible, please place your donations in the Fellowship Hall near the piano. We appreciate your support of our Backpack Ministry. A signup sheet is on the Round Table for those willing to assist with the setup in Thursday, the sale on Friday, and the takedown on Saturday. Please help as much as you are able.



THE QUARTERLY ALL COMMITTEE MEETING will be on Monday May 5th. The evening begins with a light dinner followed by the individual gatherings. The signup sheet is on the Round Table. We encourage you to join us.

GOD'S GARDEN will start back up on May 6th and May 20th at 9am. Our first session will be general cleanup and then planning for the future. Bring your gloves, rakes, leaf blowers, etc. Please join us for **one hour** of work to beautify our church grounds followed by a relaxing period of coffee and dessert together. Many hands make the work light. We have a signup sheet on the Round Table and would love to have you join us..



WHITE CAPS BASEBALL: The snow is finally gone (we hope!) and now it is time for Baseball. The signup sheet for the August 23rd game is on the Round Table. Be sure to get your name down for the limited number of reserved tickets. Please see Bill Cronkhite if you have any questions.



YOUTH BAKE SALE FUNDRAISER will be Sunday May 18th shortly after the worship service. There is a signup sheet on the Round Table with all the relevant information. We plan to use the funds by helping our Confirmands attend a Confirmation Camp at Stoney Lake in July and possibly also send youth to the National ELCA Youth Conference.



INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW: From Pastor Chris: *Shortly after I begin the call to each congregation I have served, I include an article on my salutation: SDG. However, in this case, I realize that many of you were not here in February of 2022, so reprint a synopsis of that month's article.*

SDG = Soli Deo Gloria = To God alone be the glory



My salutation is just a shorthand way of reminding myself, and you, that we are called to glorify God in all that we say and do. That is the focus of our ministry and the purpose of our lives.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER PROFILE

Oliver Dean Rogers

Age 3

School and Grade: Will be attending Woodland Montessori in August, 2025.

Oliver's Hobbies and Interests: Oliver is a social and an emotional guy! He loves to hang with his cousins and his friends, ride his bike around town, and play at any park - especially if other kids are playing. He enjoys making hot wheels tracks and smashing his monster trucks, pretending to make food in his kitchen, and enjoys reading many books before bedtime. His favorite books are "The Little Engine that Could" and "Where Do Steam Trains Sleep at Night?"

What Oliver would like everyone at Immanuel to know about him. He wants everyone to know that he loves and cares about you! He has grown so much through our church community, and he looks forward to seeing you all every chance he gets.



