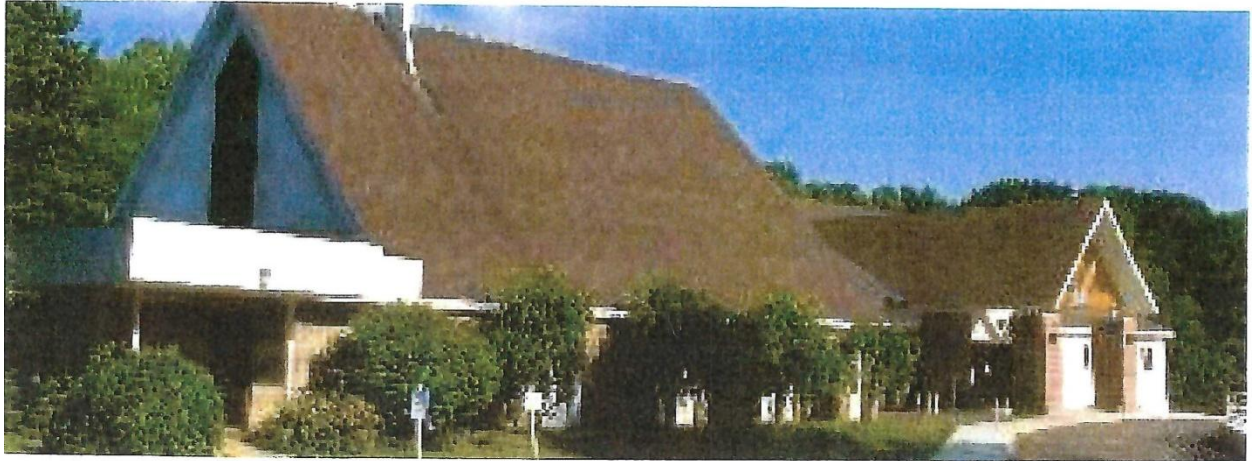




OCTOBER 2025



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Richard Bierlein – October 6

Bret Dagostino – October 19

Tessa Compton – October 25





OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Gerald & Ursala Armourillo – October 11

Jeremy & Jennifer Vance – October 11

Doug & Tammy Reed – October 19

Michael & Karen Acosta - 29



WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR OCTOBER

October 5

Reader - Linda Havens
Assistant - Donna Preisler
Counters - Joyce Davis & Rick Bierlein
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

October 12

Reader - Bernie Leneau
Assistant - Donna Preisler
Counters - Joyce Davis & Mike Aksamit
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

October 19

Reader - Michele Radke
Assistant - Mike Fusillo
Counters - Laura Compton & Sharon Aksamit
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

October 26

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, October 2025: Adiaphora: Does It Matter? Really? (Probably Not)

Then [Jesus] said to them, "You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! thus nullifying the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on.

- Jesus, Mark 7

Therefore, do not let anyone condemn you in matters of food or drink or of observing festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths.

- Colossians 2:16

For Reformation Sunday this year, we're going to learn an old Reformation word that is still very important today (stay with me). Adiaphora (ah – dee – ah – for – ah). (Stay with me.) Ironically, it's a word that really matters, even though it literally means "indifferent matters," though Lutherans defined it as "that which is neither commanded nor forbidden by Scripture."

The color of the carpet is the classic example of adiaphora. It doesn't matter. I promise you, it's not in Scripture. But congregations fight over it (it's also the classic / stereotypical of a "stupid church fight," too). You know what else is adiaphora? As I said last year, altar flowers are not in Scripture or our Lutheran Confessions (tradition / theology), either. They're adiaphora.

In fact, most of the things that occupy our time and attention in the congregation fall into the category of "adiaphora." Altar cloths / paraments / vestments? Windows? Cemetery? The Liturgical Calendar? The budget? All adiaphora.

Wait – even the budget? Yes, even the budget. And the congregation's constitution (except where it talks about matters of faith and doctrine, like in chapter 2.)

Because here's the rub – just because Scripture or the Confessions don't mention a topic, doesn't make it unimportant. How we organize ourselves (congregational constitution) matters. How we live in the world (budget) matters (just ask the electric company).

But the concept of adiaphora is very helpful because it puts things into perspective. Jesus institutes the sacraments, promises to convey grace through them, and commands us to baptize and receive the Lord's Supper. The sacraments are not adiaphora.

But whether we call our governing body a "congregational council" or a "session" (Presbyterian) or a "vestry" (Episcopalian) is adiaphora, because that's not in Scripture (I checked); that's much less important than the sacraments.

Just because a thing is adiaphora doesn't automatically make it bad! We don't have to throw it out, stop doing it, or make a change just because it's adiaphora! We just need a little perspective: is this something that is commanded or forbidden?

And, in times of stress or argument, it can help us to ask ourselves: "does this really matter?" I have lots of preferences, but most of them don't matter and I just have to get over myself when I don't get my way.

(On a complete aside, sometimes modern legal matters aren't in Scripture or the Confessions but they really do matter; this is a completely different topic.)

Usually, when I draw hard lines about things we must do or things we absolutely cannot do at Immanuel Lutheran Church (like chips and soda instead of bread and wine for Holy Communion), it's because there's a Scriptural or Confessional reason. Otherwise, I have to remind myself that most of what we do is adiaphora. Not necessarily unimportant, but adiaphora.

SDG,

Pr. Chris

Notes:

Reformation Sunday is the 26th of October! That day, we will accept Daniel Doornhaag (the most senior) as a member at the same time that we confirm Danny Doornhaag (the most junior)! It's fun to wear red that day BUT IT IS NOT REQUIRED! It's adiaphora (see my pastor's page).

Our next confirmation fundraiser will be a lunch after worship that same Sunday, 26 October.

On Tuesday, 28 October, we will go to Grand Ravine, to offer brunch and lead games for the residents.

Pam is looking to update the directory, so if you would like to be in the directory or if you would like to update your information, please see Pam. PLEASE NOTE: being in the directory is not a commitment (we're not asking you to join or become a member), and we have put safeguards in

place to protect your information. We will not share or post your information (please see the next note). It's just nice to have a way to contact you, and since we've grown so much in the last 4 years, it's nice to be able to point to the directory and say "that's who I'm talking about!"

We recently had an incident in which a person was interested in attending events at and hosted by Immanuel: Bible study, dinner night out, and Sunday worship. This person lives with developmental disabilities. I think he got the phone numbers for each member of council from our bulletin. He called each member of council repeatedly, and once he got my mobile number, he called me more than 20 times. For this reason, we have removed the phone numbers of the council members from the bulletin, and I would ask that, if Person A asks you for the contact information of Person B, please get Person B's permission before you share it. (This is the abbreviated version of this story; for more details, please ask Pastor Chris.)



UPCOMING

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.



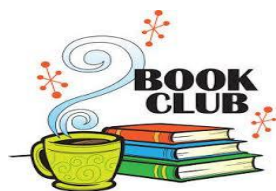
Zumba meets in the Fellowship Hall every Wednesday at 6pm and every Saturday at 10am, unless there is a conflict with a church function.

BIBLE AND BREW will meet on Monday October 13th at 5:30pm at the Trestle Stop in Hamilton. This is a great time to get to know one another better over a good meal and the individual discussion of interesting questions. Please come and join us. The signup sheet is on the Round Table.

THE CHURCH COUNCIL meets Monday evening October 20th at 6:30pm. 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 will meet on Monday October 27th at 1pm in the Fellowship Hall. This month we will have a discussion of *A Canticle for Lebowitz* by Walter M. Miller



We choose the next month's reading at each gathering.
We welcome everyone to come and join us.

Dinner Nite Out will be Saturday October 18th at 5:30pm. This month we will be gathering at Joe Shmoe's. The address and details are on the signup sheet on the Round Table. This is a great way to visit different restaurants in our area. We always have a great time and lively informal discussions. If you would like to host and choose the restaurant for any future month, please see the signup sheet on the Round Table.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE: We have added a couple of names below and will be making other changes to the directory soon. If you need to make a change to your listing or would like to have your photo included, please contact Pam Kraai (616)566-8300 pawbk22@gmail.com.



Tyler & Amourilla Burnett
Scarlett Burnett
107 Elm Street
Allegan, Michigan 49010

Eric, Luca, and Ezra Mintz
638 Sherman Street
Allegan, Michigan 49010

TEACHERS AT LE WHITE MIDDLE SCHOOL: As part of our support for our local schools, we will once again provide a light luncheon for the teachers during their conference periods on Thursday, October 16th. Please signup to bring what you are able. There is a signup sheet on the Round Table with the items needed.



GRAND RAVINE BRUNCH: The residents at Grand Ravine will provide the food and we will support them with games for everyone. There will be more information later so please watch for it in the church bulletin.

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 is 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 gravesite rituals would usually include offerings of flowers, candles, and prayers for our loved ones. And we often celebrate and honor the saints within our congregation on All Saints Sunday (November 2nd) by reading the names of those within our community of faith 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 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

HALLOWEEN thus grew out of these customs for **ALL HALLOWS EVE**. For many young children, the visit to the cemetery could be a bit scary. Especially when the visit was late in the evening (emphasis upon 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!

