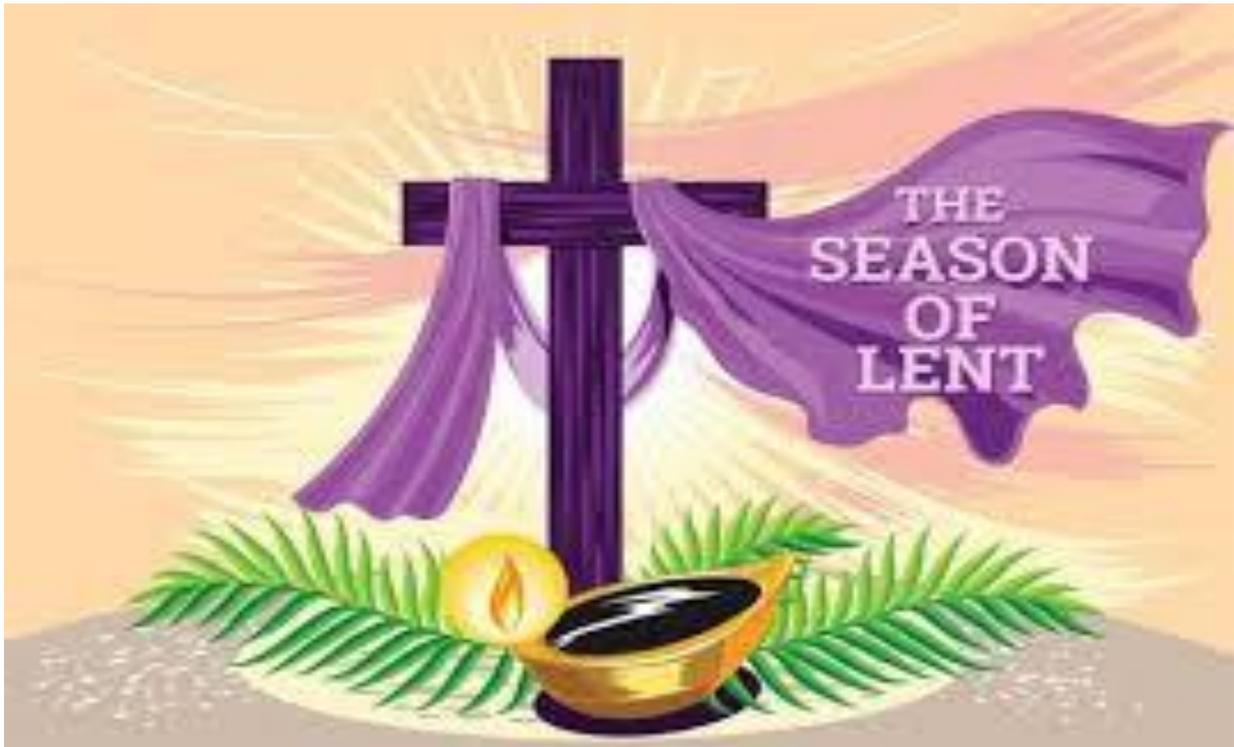


**MARCH 2026**



**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**  
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



## ***MARCH BIRTHDAYS***

Ken Kingsbury - March 1

Sharon Aksamit - March 1

DJ Betzner - March 13

Erin Davis - March 16

Soren Doornhaag - March 20

Joyce Davis - March 27

Brad VanMelle - March 27



## **WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR MARCH**

### **March 1**

- Reader - Jennifer Vance
- Assistant - Jim Horwath
- Counters - Joyce Davis & Nancy Brauer
- Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **March 8**

- Reader - Bernie Lenau
- Assistant - Donna Preisler
- Counters - Laura Compton & Mike Aksamit
- Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **March 15**

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

### **March 22**

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

### **March 29**

- Reader: - Karen Acosta
- Assistant: - Mike Acosta
- Counters: - Joyce Davis & Mike Aksamit
- 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, March 2026: Things Jesus Didn't Say**

**"Accept Jesus Christ as Your Personal Lord and Savior"**

Again, you will find this phrase nowhere in Scripture. The closest you will come is "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking" from Revelation 3:20. But again, context matters, because earlier in that chapter (v8) "Look, I have set before you an open door that no one is able to shut," and just a few verses later (4:1) is "...there in heaven a door stood open!" So I don't know how helpful (or clear or consistent) the door imagery is here.

First, this is not really a concept in the ancient world. Religion was a communal endeavor, and in Acts, we see whole households (families) become Christian. When individuals did leave their families and become, they did not become Christian alone; they joined a new family (and were usually disowned by their biological family – see even John 9, which we will read on Sunday, 15 March).

Second, directly contradicting the notion of "accepting Jesus," Jesus himself actually says "You did not choose me, but I chose you." (John 15:16). Even in the Old Testament, the initiative rests with God, who calls Noah, Abraham, Moses, Amos, Jeremiah, etc. – and believe me when I tell you, none of these people volunteered or asked for God to call them. I can literally think of no examples of someone volunteering.

But the deeper issue is our understanding of Sin. Not sin or sins, but Sin. Lutherans, like our Reformed friends, believe that the human condition does not allow us to accept Jesus; we are inherently too selfish. Jesus breaks the bonds of sin in order to save us from ourselves, the world, and the devil.

Jesus himself tells us that we are his choice and our salvation is his decision. We do not accept him; he accepts us.

SDG, Pr. Chris

The midweek services have moved back to Wednesdays! Potluck dinner at 6pm, Worship / study at 6:45pm. For the study portion, we will move through the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

With one exception! On Wednesday, 25 March, we will celebrate the Annunciation!

On Sunday, 15 March, the Confirmands will host a St. Patrick Day Themed “goodies exchange” after worship. I will bring Irish Potato Candy (which is neither Irish no potato but is all candy... 😊 )

I will be at Fort Carson in Colorado with the Army Monday through Friday, 16-20 March.

While these things are in April, they happen so early in April that I include them here:

- Maundy Thursday Worship, 6pm
- Good Friday Worship
  - Seven Last Words, 1pm
  - Tenebrae, 7pm

I haven't been as good about remembering to include this information every month, but this month, I'm remembering to publish the names of those for whom we've been asked to pray:

Pat Sweeris, who attends our bible study, is having trouble with her knees

Sarah, the wife of one of my Soldiers: her cancer has returned

Arleen, Laura Compton's sister

Louis Gasper, placed on the list by Ken Kingsbury, has bladder cancer

Nicole Pearson, a friend from college, is pregnant and has cancer

Kathy, placed on the list by Maryann Fusillo

Nicole Radke, placed on the list by Michele Radke

Pam Forsythe, placed on the list by Ken Kingsbury

Mike, placed on the list by Laura Compton, has Alzheimer's

Lisa, Mike's caregiver

The others on the list are members of Immanuel

SDG,  
Pr. Chris



# UPCOMING EVENTS

**Quilting Group** meets every Tuesday in the Quilting Room at 9am. Immanuel has been known over the years for our support and participation in the quilting ministry. These quilts are sent all over the world through Lutheran World Relief, including some for the homeless here in the United States. Donna Moeller has almost singlehandedly kept this mission going of late and would greatly appreciate having others come and join her for three hours on Tuesday mornings. Donna says these quilts are very simple to make and she can quickly help anyone learn. Last year we donated around 240 quilts to LWR which is about four every Tuesday.



**Bible Study Group** meets every Wednesday at 10am in the Study Room. We discuss the Bible Readings for the upcoming Sunday Worship Service. If you would like to be placed on the email list to receive an advance copy of the readings, please contact the church office. We always have a lively and interesting discussion and we encourage you to join us if you are able.

**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 at 9am for coffee, cinnamon rolls, and fellowship. If you know of a veteran, please invite them to join our group. This is a great way for them to have fellowship and discuss shared experiences.



**GOD'S GARDEN:** This group will meet on the First and Third Tuesday of every month. During the winter months the group will concentrate on the *inside garden* (i.e. the church building). As the weather changes we will work again on the church landscape and the church cemetery grounds. Check the Round Table for signup sheets and more instructions. Please join us if you are able as many hands make the work load light.



**Zumba** Because of the Wednesday Lenten services, Zumba will not meet on Wednesdays for the month of March. But they will continue to meet every Saturday at 10am.

**BIBLE AND BREW** will meet on Monday March 9<sup>th</sup> 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** will meet at 6:30pm on Monday March 16<sup>th</sup> in the Adult Bible Study Room. If anyone has a report to be presented at the council meeting, please send it to the church office before Noon and we will print copies for you. Anyone is welcome to attend the council meeting if you have something that they need to know about.

**BOOK GROUP** will meet on Monday March 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1pm in the Fellowship Hall. This month we will read and discuss *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon. We always choose the next month's reading at each gathering so join us and share your favorite book.



**LENTEN SEASON:** During the Lenten season we will have a soup supper at 6:00pm and worship services in the sanctuary at 6:45pm every Wednesday until Holy Week which begins with *Palm Sunday* on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Lent is a 40-day solemn Christian season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, starting on Ash Wednesday (Feb. 18, 2026)



and ending before the Easter Triduum. It prepares believers for Easter through reflection, self-examination, and repentance, mimicking Jesus's 40 days in the wilderness.

**Investing in Our Youngest Disciples** We are so grateful for Ursula's dedication to our youth Sunday School! To ensure our program stays consistent, we are looking for a few more volunteers to step in as "backup" teachers for the Sundays when Ursula is away. If you have a heart for our kids and a little time to share, we'd love to have you on the team. Please talk to Ursula or contact the church office.



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS** March 8<sup>th</sup> which means it is time to *spring forward*. The **vernal equinox**, two moments in the year when the Sun is exactly above the Equator and day and night are of equal length; also, either of the two points in the sky where the ecliptic (the Sun's apparent annual pathway through the sky) and the celestial equator intersect.



**TIGER'S CLOSET COLLECTION** . . . throughout the season of Lent (Ash Wednesday through Palm Sunday), we will collect items for students at L.E. White Middle School. Check out the explanation below and the wish list of items from their principal, Laura Feffer. When you are out shopping, pick up an item or two to toss in the baskets near our church entrance. Thank you for your support to show our students a little bit of love!



*At our school, we believe that every student deserves to walk through our doors with dignity, hope, and the tools they need to succeed – not just academically, but as whole, healthy individuals. But for too many of our students and their families, that foundation is missing.*

**That's why the Tiger's Closet was created.**

*Housed within our school, the Tiger's Closet is more than a storage room – it's a lifeline. It provides free access to essential hygiene products, clothing, school supplies, and other basic items for students and families who are facing hardship.*

*Some children walk in with shoes that don't fit, wearing the same clothes for days. Others quietly struggle with not having deodorant, shampoo, or even a backpack to carry their books. These are not just inconveniences – they are barriers to learning, confidence, and well-being.*

*Each day, we see the difference a small act of kindness can make. A warm coat on a freezing morning. A fresh pair of socks. A notebook for class. The Tiger's Closet offers these small, but powerful reminders that someone cares. **Laura Jeffer.***

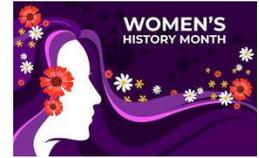
### **WISH LIST FOR TIGERS STORE**

- Deodorant (male and Female)
- Lotion
- Chapstick
- Brush and comb
- Menstrual Products
- Girls pants and jeans and sweatshirts; especially for taller girls
- Sweats and jeans for boys
- New socks and underwear for boys and girls
- Athletic shoes for boys and girls
- Binders
- Mechanical pencils and lead
- Snacks (Granola bars, fruit snacks, bags of chips, peanut butter crackers, etc.)
- Few non perishable foods
- Bottled water
- Inexpensive water bottles
- Inexpensive earbuds/headphones

**WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**, celebrated in March in the U.S., originated from local efforts in California in 1978 that grew into a national week in 1981, then a full month in 1987, to recognize women's often overlooked contributions, building on International Women's Day (March 8) and celebrating women's advancements in education, politics, and other fields while highlighting ongoing inequalities, with annual themes set by organizations like the National Women's History Alliance.



Twelve women who changed the world include pioneers like Marie Curie (radioactivity), Malala\_Yousafzai (girls' education), Patsy Mink (Title IX), Fatima\_al\_Fihri (first university), Florence Nightingale (modern nursing), Rosalind\_Franklin (DNA structure), Valentina\_Tereshkova (first woman in space), Wangari\_Maathai (environmentalism/Nobel Peace Prize), Sandra\_Day\_O'Connor (first female Supreme Court Justice), Tammy Duckworth (veterans/disability advocacy), Barbara\_Jordan (civil rights/politics), and Sirimavo\_Bandaranaike (world's first female Prime Minister). These figures transformed science, education, politics, and human rights through their groundbreaking achievements and activism.



NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION



FREE PROGRAM

## FINDING A LIVING DONOR



**REGISTER TODAY!**

[nkfm.org/BigAskBigGive](https://nkfm.org/BigAskBigGive)



Do you need a kidney transplant? Or do you know someone who needs one? In this free program, you'll learn effective tools and tips for finding a living kidney donor. You'll also hear living donor recipients and living donors share their stories.

**Join Us!**

**Monday, March 17, 2025**

**6:00 – 8:00pm ET**

**Location: Hybrid**

In-Person at Henry Ford Hospital in the Education & Resource Room (E&R 2055)  
or Zoom Video Conference

*A light dinner will be provided to in-person attendees.  
Zoom requires a computer or device with Internet access.*

In Partnership With:



**HENRY FORD HEALTH.**  
Transplant

**Questions?**

Contact Devon Hagerman at the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan:  
800.482.1455 ext. 2370 or  
[dhagerman@nkfm.org](mailto:dhagerman@nkfm.org)