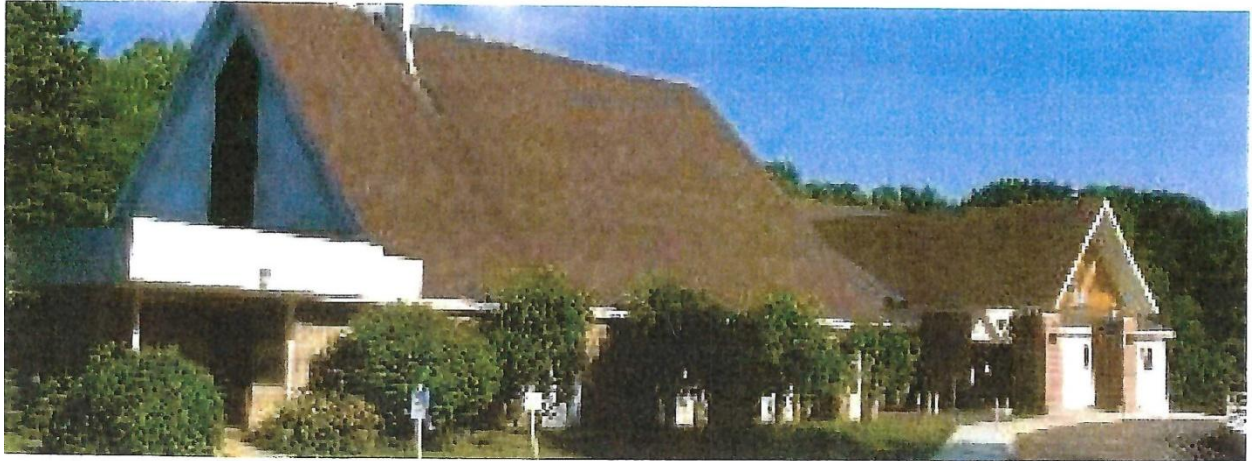




JULY 2026



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA
631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Susan Zeiler – July 2

Renee Steffey – July 3

Maribella Armourillo – July 9

Gerald Armourillo – July 11

Tyler Burnett – July 14

Maryann Fusillo – July 14

Lennon Goodyke – July 17

Grady Armourillo – July 19

Shepard VanMelle – July 23

Meri Gorr – July 25

Jeremy Vance – July 29





JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Harold & Renee Steffey - July 3
Ken Kinsey & Dottie Steffey - July 10
Michael & Sharon Aksamit - July 26



WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR JULY

July 5

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

July 12

Reader - Karen Acosta
Assistant - Linda Scott
Counters - Joyce Davis & Sharon Aksamit
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

July 19

Reader - Michele Radke
Assistant - Mike Fusillo
Counters - Joyce Davis & Mike Aksamit
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

July 26

Reader: - Sharon Aksamit
Assistant: - Mike Aksamit
Counters: - Laura Compton & 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.





Pr. Page, July 2027: Things I Wish Weren't in the Bible / Things I Wish Jesus Hadn't Said, Part I:

Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again.

- Jesus, Luke 6:30 (from the "Sermon on the Plain")

I had just been given cash – a rarity for me. I was headed to my favorite bakery, the Victorian Bakery in the Northside of Kalamazoo, to get myself one of my favorite treats – a raspberry oat bar. And I was on something of a timetable.

Of course, the moment I stepped from my vehicle, a man who clearly had some kind of disability or mental health issue approached me and asked me for "a few bucks."

Usually, I could honestly say "I don't have any cash," because usually, I don't have any cash. But this time was different because, as I just mentioned, I did, in fact, have cash. I did not have anything smaller than a \$20 bill, but I was wearing my clerical collar. And I did not have time to take him to the nearby grocery store to get him whatever he needed.

I live in Plainwell, but I travel through Kalamazoo enough to know many of what must be the best corners for people with cardboard signs. I'd guess you know a few of them, too, if you think about it.

And it doesn't help that 131 is a mess this summer, so I often take surface roads.

Can you see why I wish Jesus had simply not said "give to everyone who begs from you?"

So, if we take these words of Jesus seriously (and shouldn't we take everything Jesus says seriously?), what are we to do?

Give him the money. Why?

- Because you have enough (unless you really don't have enough – but if that's the case, why are you buying goodies at the Victorian Bakery?)
- Because it's not your issue if he is lying or misuses it.
- Because he might well just be hungry.
- Because, most importantly, Jesus says so.

Still, I wish Jesus hadn't said that.

- Because I was really looking forward to spending that \$20 on a book (because, obviously, I don't have enough books and I need more books).
- Because that was my money (even though it was a gift and it's really God's money; see Deuteronomy 8:11-20, especially verses 17-18)
- Because it's none of his business (even though he's God, so by definition, *everything* is his business – even business)

This isn't about guilt. It's about doing what Jesus tells us to do. Even if we wish he hadn't. A colleague (Pastor Vicky) says "it wasn't what Jesus says that I don't understand that bothers me; it's what Jesus says that I do understand that bothers me!"

SDG,

Pr. Chris

Notes from Pastor Chris:

On Army Retirement, Part III:



By the time I retire, I will have been a Soldier for more than 24 years, longer than I've been a pastor, a husband, and even longer than my primary vocation was "student" (yes, I know we're all life-longer learners, and you know that's not what I mean 😊). People ask me if I will miss it, and I think the answer is something like "yes, but it's time." I'll miss the comraderie, the sense of (common) purpose, the feeling of serving a greater cause and being a part of something greater than myself, the respect inherent to the office, and the \$30,000 (or so) a year. But it's time. While there are other reasons, here are some of the more prominent in my life: I'm tired of the Army's constant changes, tired of worrying about height/weight and the Army Fitness Test, tired of the travel, and tired of splitting my attention between Immanuel and the Army. Much of this didn't bother me until last the three years (or so), and I take that as partial reinforcement of my understanding that God is calling me out of the Army. I've done my part. It's time to be done.

New Members!

Ethan and Jacquelyn Burnside will join Immanuel during worship on Sunday, 5 July! Please come to support them!

Traveling for the Army:

I will be at ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering in Indianapolis, and because it's a requirement to maintain my ELCA endorsement as a chaplain to the Army, the Army is paying me to be there, from Monday, 6 July through Friday, 10 July (leaving after worship on Sunday, 5 July).

I will also be at the Rock Island Arsenal 20 – 25 July (leaving after worship on Sunday, 19 July).

The Door Sticks:

It's summer! Which means our outside glass doors expand in the warmer weather. If you are the last person to leave (even if I'm still wandering around the building), please double-check and pull the door to make sure the lock catches.

Church Council Meeting Minutes 5/18/2026

Parish Council



1. Meeting called to order at 6:30pm.
2. Council attendance - Trevor absent.
3. Minutes from 4/20/26 are reviewed and accepted.
4. Treasurers report - Report given by Sandi - Meri has access to the accounts now. Check on where the Simply Giving money is going, Trevor recommends converting completely to tithely if possible. The Thrivent Funds are down \$1,134.13 after \$10,000 withdrawal.
5. Noisy Offering - Mike & Jim
6. Pastors Report - Backpacks is in the community category but will move to the congregation category. Intern Kathleen will be with us in June. P. Chris has started a podcast, episodes out soon. The Hillside graduation will not be here, they have chosen a new place. Nicole Radke's Memorial Service is May 21 & 22. Confirmation is June 14.
7. Committee Reports
 - a. Worship and Music - Shelley - The Choir's final song before summer will be "Blessed Assurance", they will start up again in the fall. At the All Committee Meeting it was decided that the sign dedication will be June 28 (rain date July 12). Wine Sunday will be June 7. We will use EcoPalms one more year, if it doesn't go well, another vendor will be used. We will be continuing to use the current bread recipe until a new one can be tried.
 - b. Education - Rick & Ursula - Sunday school has been wrapped up, with icecream. Adult Sunday school has wrapped up, and cake has been ordered for confirmation.
 - c. Mission and Outreach - Sharon - Rummage sale went well, we made \$858 from the sale, we will make sure to find the signs for next year. Memorial day lunch Jessie will lead. Backpack fundraising thermometer will be put up in early June, the goal is \$2000.
 - d. Faith community Nurse - Maryann - AED and Narcan are good. Bookclub was rescheduled. Care Team is good.
 - e. Property - Mike - Church building was power washed. New lawn service is going well, the tree has been taken care of. Since the dishwasher is fine, next up is looking into a water heater replacement (tankless vs regular). A live trap has been set for the groundhogs so we can find a new home they will like better. God's Garden is meeting on 5/19/26 and will set up the American Flags for departed Veterans. The Synod Assembly was really great, lots of good ideas and things to think about, P. Chris gave a speech and got a standing ovation! Mike will be gone for the June meetings (Council & God's Garden) and if someone is available to help with God's Garden for June he would appreciate it.
8. Old Business

a. Youth gathering - July 2027 MN, reservations open in Nov., all youth fundraising from this point on goes towards that trip.

b. Church Camp - payment, Aug 2-7

9. New Business

a. Mallory - Mallory would like to be a member, it has been voted and accepted, she is welcome to be an official member now.

b. Need to remember to put up the chairs on the tables for Norma.

c. Lisa Sandor - would like to know if we are open to having the craft market here (previously at Robinson Manor), Sandi will talk to her about coming to the June meeting.

d. Church Picnic is August 9, pot luck except for hotdogs/burgers, at Laura and Bernie's home.

Meeting adjourned with prayer at 7:26pm Next meeting 6/15/26 @ 6:30pm

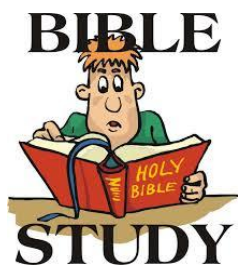


UPCOMING EVENTS

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. If you are willing, please join us for three hours on Tuesday mornings.



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: *Please take a moment when you pull up to the church to appreciate the beautiful landscaping.* We have a dedicated group that



meets on the First and Third Tuesday of every month. They tend to limit the work time to about **One Hour** each day. If you are able, please join us as many hands make the work load light.

BIBLE AND BREW will meet on Monday July 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 will meet at 6:30pm on Monday July 20th 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, especially if you have something that they need to know about.

BOOK GROUP will meet on Monday July 27th at 1pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please watch your Sunday bulletin for the title of the July selection. We always choose the next month's reading at each gathering so join us and share your favorite book. You will also find all the selections, including those for last year, on our church web page under *Ministries*.



DINNER NITE OUT: On Saturday, July 18th Jim and Sandie Horwath will be hosting their picnic and swim event at their home beginning at 5:00pm. Check the Round Table for a signup sheet and directions. And, if you are willing to sponsor the dinner for future months, all that is required is for you to choose the restaurant, make a reservation, and give a final count to the restaurant the week before the date. This is an excellent way for others to enjoy your favorite restaurant.



WHITECAPS GAME: The date is coming up soon and we look forward to what has become our annual gathering to see the game. Bill Cronkhite has reserved several great seats for the game on August 15th and there is a signup sheet on the Round Table. We will need a final count soon so please sign up now. The cost is \$16 per person due by August 1st. This is always a fun event.



STICKING DOORS: With the summer months we must contend with higher levels of humidity. And that humidity causes our doors and frames to expand, sometimes making the doors fail to latch. As you leave the church building (especially if you are the last to leave) *please* insure that the door locked behind you. Thank you!



FORMATION OF THE UNITED STATES: We are all familiar with the stories of July 4, 1776 and the signing of the Declaration of Independence. In fact we generally recognize this date as the birthday of the United States of America. But there are several little known facts that surround this date.



The Revolutionary War actually started on April 19, 1775 with the Battles of Lexington and Concord and the *Shot heard round the World*. It was here that several Colonial militia exchanged gunfire with the British Army. After this event, things began to happen rather quickly. By May 24, 1775 the Continental Congress was formed under the Articles of Confederation. They elected John Hancock as the first President of the United States. As a matter of fact, we had fourteen presidents before George Washington became president in 1789. They are John Hancock, Henry Laurens, John Jay, Samuel Huntington, Thomas McKean, John Hanson, Elias Boudinot, Richard Henry Lee (distant cousin to Robert E. Lee), John Hancock (second term), Nathaniel Gorham, Arthur St. Clair, and Cyrus Griffin.

On May 9, 1775 George Washington, who was a very tall man for the period, attended the Continental Congress while they were to decide who to appoint as commander of the Militia Forces. He was the only person dressed in full military uniform so naturally they chose him as the Commander of what became the Continental Army. It is interesting to note that in his acceptance he stated that he would do his best *not to lose the war*. By 1778 King Louis XVI of France decided to take advantage of the war between the American Colonist and England and entered a treaty of alliance with the Thirteen Colonies known as the Franco-American Alliance. France then immediately began a war with England over the dominance of the English Channel known as the Anglo-French War.

Finally, the French Navy and the French Army joined forces with the Continental Army in the siege of Yorktown in October 1781. The British Forces, under the leadership of General Lord Charles Cornwallis were forced to surrender and this became the turning point in the war. The wars in Europe and America finally ended with the Treaty of Paris signed in 1783 when England surrendered to France AND granted the Colonist in America their independence. In 1886 France would give the United States the Statue of Liberty to commemorate the alliance between the two nations during the American Revolution and the centennial of American Independence.





UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN HEALTH
MICHIGAN MEDICINE



The University of Michigan Transplant Center is pleased to invite you to a kidney transplant educational program on living donation. The program includes information on ways to help you or your loved one find a potential living kidney donor. We hope you will be able to join us for this session. The program is open to patients, families, friends, or anyone interested in learning more about living donation.

*Facts and Myths of Living Donation and How
to Find a Living Donor*

Program will include “Explore Living Donation” video, patient and donor stories, and a panel of transplant experts.

Thursday, August 6, 2026
6:15-8:00 p.m.
Virtual

Registration is required.
Please go to <https://michmed.org/9ZG8N> to register or
scan QR code below.



For questions, please contact:
transplantoutreach@med.umich.edu or (734) 936-7093.

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

WHEN: Sunday, August 9

TIME: Following Worship Service

WHERE: 1822 30TH Street, Allegan



Don't miss out on a fun day at Immanuel Lutheran's Church Picnic.

Burgers, hotdogs and brats will be cooking on the grill. Water, Lemonade and Iced Tea will be provided, as well as condiments and paper products. Each family is asked to bring a dish to pass (or a small bag of ice) and your choice of drink if you prefer something else.

No need to bring chairs...there is plenty of seating for all.

There will be activities for kids of all ages...there is a swing set, sandbox, badminton/volleyball, cornhole and more; and each child will leave with a goodie bag.

Mark your calendars for a fun time. See you there!!

