

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Office Hours: 9:00am - 5:00pm, Tuesday - Thursday

Website: www.willmarwels.net



July 2022

Pastor Craig Engel • 320-444-7641

How can I know the Bible is true?

Have a headache? Take two leeches and call me in the morning. If you consult a medical text from a couple of centuries ago, that may be the remedy you find. Today a textbook would probably tell you to pop a couple of aspirin. Tomorrow... Lasers? Magnetics? Who knows what advancements or discoveries will change how a simple headache is treated? It is amazing how much the science of medicine has changed even over the course of the last hundred years. How will we ever know when we have really found the answers?

66 – 40 – 1500 – 1: What do those numbers mean? The Bible is made up of 66 books that were written by 40 writers over the course of 1500 years. But in all of those books, only one message is found. The message? We have a problem (and it isn't a simple headache). Our problem is

our sin and the guilt that it brings. That one message is also about the remedy for our problem—God sent Jesus, a perfect Savior, to die for our sin and guilt. Now believers in Jesus have the promise of eternal life in heaven. That simple message of salvation is repeated throughout the Bible, from Moses' writing in Genesis to the writings of the apostle John in Revelation. How amazing that so many different writers from different times record a single message that reveals the world's only true Savior from sin!

Maybe it isn't all that amazing. "For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, through human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). The very same God who loved us enough to send his own Son to die for us made sure that we would know about Jesus by having his message



Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.
– John 17:17

written down. Because God had men record his Word, the Bible is unlike any other book. We are told that "all Scripture is God-breathed" (2 Timothy 3:16). God himself spoke through, breathed into these writers, so their words are really God's Word. Since the Bible is God's Word, we can trust that it is true.

God is speaking to us through the words that he caused to be written in the Bible.

Thursday Evening Divine Service

We will hold Divine Services on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. They are always the same as the Sunday following. The final Thursday service for the summer will be on September 1st.

Pentecost Worship

During the first half of the church year, the church's focus is on the life of Christ. During the second half of the church year, the church turns its attention to the teachings of Christ. His words establish our faith, transform our hearts and minds, and guide our lives in him. During the Season after Pentecost, we gather to let the Holy Spirit do the work Jesus promised he would do in the way Jesus promised he would do it.

July Worship Summary

A unique feature of Luke's Gospel is the section in the middle often called "the travel narrative." This lengthy section began in chapter 9 when Luke told us that Jesus "resolutely set out for Jerusalem" (v.51). While there are many events and side trips that occur during this travel narrative, Luke regularly stresses that nothing is going to dissuade Jesus from going to Jerusalem where he will fulfill his life's mission. Jesus was very focused.

Jesus' mission and the purpose of this journey was not to gain an earthly crown. Throughout this travel narrative, Jesus makes clear that this world was not his real home. He teaches that this world is not our real home either. Jesus is focused on heaven. His mission is to get us there by going to Jerusalem and making the ultimate sacrifice to pay for our sin. Nothing would stop him. "He set his face like flint," Isaiah tells us (50:7). Jesus was focused.

As we watch the focused actions of our Savior... as we focus carefully on his words... something wonderful happens. Jesus gives focus to our lives. We finally see things clearly: how to love our neighbor, the true purpose of worship, the blessing of prayer, what is treasure (and what is

not). In this series, as Christ speaks to us through his Word, may he make us properly focused.

- July 3 – Fourth Sunday Pentecost: Christ Provides Ministers to Proclaim His Word
- July 10 – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost: Focused Love Finds a Neighbor Rather Than Avoiding One
- July 17 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost: Focused Worship Seeks Service from Jesus More Than Service for Jesus
- July 24 – Seventh Sunday after Pentecost: Focused Prayer Seeks What God Wants for Us, Now What We Think We Want from Him
- July 31 – Eighth Sunday after Pentecost: Focused Living Properly Values Heavenly Treasure

Summer Bible School

Preschoolers through sixth graders will meet on Wednesday evenings throughout the summer. We will meet at different locations around Willmar as well as at church from 5:30-7:30 p.m. We are looking for volunteers to bring and serve meals, help with crafts and teach a lesson. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex. If it rains, we will meet at church.

- July 6 – No meeting
- July 13 – Church
- July 20 – Miller Park
- July 27 – Ramblewood Park
- August 3 – Church
- August 10 – Rice Park (wear your bathing suits for the splash pad)



Directories

If you had your picture taken for the directory, your directory will be in your mailbox.

Lawnmower

The church council has approved the purchase of a new lawnmower. A request for funding will be submitted to the CPGC and funds in the current lawnmower fund will be used (currently \$1892 as of June 22nd). If you would like to contribute to the fund, please mark it on your offering envelope. The old lawnmower was sold in an auction and the proceeds were put into the lawnmower fund.



Lawn Mowing

A sign-up sheet for the lawn mowing is posted in the narthex. Please consider helping out. If you have any questions about using the lawn mower or getting into the shed, please speak with Scott Claussen, Jim Buffington or pastor.

Volunteers

We are in need of some volunteers for the following: folding bulletins and newsletters and preparing the elements for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Please consider helping out in this way. The sign-up sheets are on the shelf in the Narthex.



A Devotion: The Gospel in the Word

1Peter 1:23 - You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Consider again how great the love of God is for us, how earnest his zeal for our salvation! He knows our nature—that we are by nature spiritually dead. The dead can do nothing, cannot even will or want to do something spiritually good and God-pleasing. All that the dead can do is decay and stink! That's what we are; even the best works of the spiritually dead lack the necessary motive of love for God and trust in the work of Jesus for our salvation.

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Church Council Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2022

Members Present: Rollie Nissen, Jim Buffington, Scott Claussen, Justin Kannas, Martin Fabrizius, Todd Marxhausen, Ross Malkuch, Pastor Engel, Jay Remmele

MMSP = Motion Made, Seconded, Passed

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nissen at 11:35 a.m.

Pastor opened with a reading from Hebrews 5: 11-14 followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Agenda: MMSP to accept the agenda as presented

Secretary's Report: Minutes were not available.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Chairman's Report: No report

Elders Report:

- MMSP to receive by Holy Baptism: Eloise Mae Dols
- MMSP to accept by confirmation: Bria Marxhausen

Trustees Report:

- The new lawnmower was purchased for about \$5,200
- The old lawnmower was sold on auction, after fees we received about \$680
- The parking lot project should be completed in June
- Estimates will be gathered for a new shed

Financial Secretary's Report: MMSP to accept the Financial Secretary's report as presented

Treasurer's Report: MMSP to accept the Treasurer's report as presented

Planned Giving: There will be another meeting in May.

Pastor's Report: The music academy has been cancelled but there will still be Wednesday evening classes this summer. Jen Heller will coordinate off site classes with the first one being held at Robins Island Park.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION COMMITTEES

Equipping Christian Witnesses – recruitment, financial aid, and facility improvement at MLC

AV Committee:

- Bonnie, Judy, Ross, Todd, and Kelly
- The AV guy will be at church this week to look things over

Project List:

- Replace lawnmower shed (2022)
- Lighting for the parking lot
- Water heater
- Replace bulbs in church and parsonage with LED
- Improve sanctuary lighting
- Put a canopy over the driveway at east entrance
- Expand the parking lot
- Expand the Sunday school and fellowship hall on grade to the west

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- June 12, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. council meeting
- July 10, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. council meeting
- July 17, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. voters' meeting

Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Closed with the blessing.

Respectfully,

Jay Remmele, Recording Secretary



A Devotion: The Gospel in the Word

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Without that motive neither we nor our works can be acceptable or a sweet smelling incense to God. Without the seed of God's Word, we are dead.

What do we do with the dead? We bury the dead. We remove their decay and stench far from our sight and nostrils. Might not God do the same with us if we are dead and all our works apart from him are loathsome? But look! God does the exact opposite. He draws near to us with his Word. Unlike us, that Word is alive. It is powerful. It is living and life-giving seed.

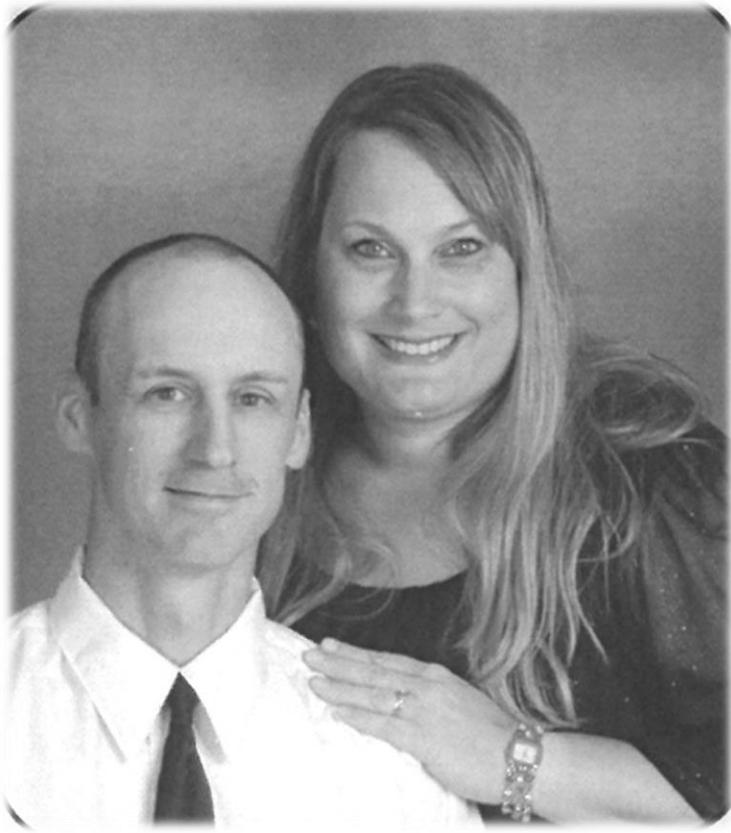
See how it works. Notice first the difference between all created seed and this seed of God's Word. Seed gives birth to something just like what that seed came from. The seed of the rose produces its like; it produces a rose bush. The seed of the oak produces oak trees. Human seed generates a human life. Now, all of that in nature is truly wonderful. But as wondrous and beautiful as the product of created seed may be, all created seed has one thing in common. It shares, as St. Peter suggests, this one characteristic: It is perishable. For what it comes from is perishable. Whatever the seeds can generate must in due course die and decay. For that is the nature of every created seed—the life it produces is but for a time, and then it passes away. The rose withers and fades. The mighty oak falls and rots. And human beings die and decay.

But the seed that is the Word of God—that is miraculously different, more powerful, and more beautiful and glorious than any other seed. The rose fades and withers away; the mighty oak falls and rots. And human beings with only natural seed for their life die. But the life that comes from the seed of God's Word has its source in God who is life itself and who can never perish. From that incorruptible and imperishable seed, St. Peter tells us, we have been born again. The life that comes from this seed of the Word lives on forever and ever. Forever and ever this life is sustained and preserved from death and decay by that ever-living Word and the living Christ, who comes to dwell with us in it.

But seedbeds have to be prepared for planting; they cannot prepare themselves. Without someone to get the seedbed ready, any sowing will be in vain. So the sower prepares the soil. How does God do that with the seedbed of our souls? He does it, so to speak, by ruling over the conditions in the field where he wants to plant his Word.

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SPOTLIGHTING Our Members



Jay and Tina Remmele came to us from Mankato 20 years ago already. They grew up in Redwood Falls, got married and both attended college in Mankato. They moved to Paynesville after Tina finished college in the fall of 2001. They are 43 years young and have two daughters. Kate, 25, is married to Logan with a 6-year-old stepson and they live in St. Cloud. Jenna, 23, lives in Cold Spring and is engaged to Brandon. Jay and Tina enjoy fishing and game nights with the kids.

Jay works as a warranty and service administrator at A & C Farm Service in Paynesville. Tina works as a Health Inspector for the Minnesota Department of Health in the Food, Pools and Lodging section.

They value our Christ-centered and Bible-based worship led by a gifted WELS educated Pastor. Jay has served for many years on the Council. Tina serves for coffee and special occasions.

They feel there are endless opportunities to serve the Lord, whether it is helping a struggling family, volunteering at the local food shelf, repairing a car for someone in need, shoveling a driveway, and many more.

Their life has been enriched by a Christ-centered, Bible based perspective in all our church.

A Devotion: The Gospel in the Word

(Continued from page 3.)

He may soften the soil of the soul by sending outward blessings, bringing us to recognize a goodness altogether apart from what our soul has of itself or could ever deserve. Some blindly chalk up God's generosity just to good luck. So then also during the course of a lifetime, he sends needs that cannot be satisfied by earthly things. He sends grief and loss that stir up the hard soil and point to the futility of all merely earthly things, the futility even of life itself that ends in death. He may send struggles that come from the devil and the world and the sinful flesh; with failure in those struggles comes the consequences of sin in lives torn by strife or shame. These may pierce the hard crust of the soul and create a longing for peace that can never be found with certainty from anything in the world. Ultimately, he will send the sharp points of the law to convict the soul of its desperate need for rescue from the futility of the world. As the law digs deep into the soul, it will show the need of rescue from sin and guilt and from the wrath of God displayed in death, which points ahead to an eternal misery.

Then after the soul-soil has been watered by blessings and plowed up by troubles and turned over by guilt, he causes his seed of the gospel to be sown. There the Savior shines forth as the real source of all goodness and blessing. He causes the message of peace that only he can give to be heard. He comes with pardon from his cross for the sin-sick soul. He comes in the gospel to give peace, contentment, and joy in the knowledge that, having him and his promise, we have everything. He comes with the promise of strength to endure and of final rescue to sooth the burdened and the suffering soul. He points us to the purpose of all that we suffer in life, the purpose of separating us from worship of the world and the things of the world. That's the real beginning of life—life that comes from the living seed of God's living and life-giving Word.

He may send the blessing of friends, neighbors, or relatives and the gift of pastors and teachers who serve as sowers of the seed. They speak of the blessings to be found only in Christ, only in forgiveness, only in the gospel. These sowers of the gospel live out their lives as a witness to the lasting peace and joy that comes from the gospel, no matter what the circumstance of the moment may be. It may take many sowings and much time. But often the sowing is blessed and the seed gives birth to life from what had been just barren soul-soil.

We ourselves are proof of it; that is how our God and Savior has dealt with us our whole life long. Just think of it: All the outward blessings that you enjoy are God's softening of the soil of your soul. Then his Word comes alive in you, and you recognize that every blessing in your life is his gift. Troubles come and losses too. Then you hear his Word and by it come to trust in his ultimate rescue; you come to see that even the loss of life itself is no loss at all. Having the Savior, we have as well the promise of life everlasting. Still we stumble; still we fall. But with each fall and its reminder of our weakness, we fly again to the gospel; we listen to it and see again our Savior's outstretched arms. Yet again he welcomes us to the banquet of forgiveness. At his Word and welcome, the soul springs once more to life and warms to his embrace—we are alive again! So then, this little passage from St. Peter's first letter sums up yet again the whole of our life and everything in it..

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