

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

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September 2022

Pastor Craig Engel • 320-444-7641

Why does bad stuff happen to me?

My mom has cancer. My dad lost his job. My sister is in high school and pregnant. My brother's grades are slipping. Work is so stressful. My life is unstable. Why does bad stuff happen to me?

Plenty of people have plenty of suggestions.
"Maybe God does not love you."
"Maybe he is punishing you for something."
"Maybe everything is too much for him to handle."

Do you want to know the real answer?
It is staggering. "God is LOVE" (1 John 4:16).

What? How can that be? How can there be so many bad things in my life if God is love? Wouldn't a loving God just erase all the bad stuff and only give me good? Well...no.

The kids need shots. They cry with pain. You love them. Are shots "bad"?

You need surgery. It's going to hurt and take some time to heal. Your doctor cares about you. Is surgery "bad"?

Your football coach tells you to run ten 100-yard-sprints. It's not exactly a vacation. Your coach wants what is best for you. Are the sprints "bad"?

So much in our lives looks like "bad stuff," but it is really "good." It certainly looked like a lot of "bad stuff" was happening on the day Jesus died. Jesus was falsely accused of breaking the law. He was whipped, mocked, and executed on the cross. That is some really "bad stuff" for Jesus, but Christians still call that day GOOD Friday.

Because of that "bad stuff" on Good Friday, Jesus removes all of our sins and all of our guilt and says, "I'll take those for you. I'll make them mine." Jesus has tremendous love for us. He takes the punishment away from us. He has the power to handle everything in our lives.

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? – Romans 8:32

While everyone has their own opinions about why "bad stuff" happens to them, God gently points me to Jesus and gives me the right answer: "God is LOVE."

Do you want to learn more about this love? We invite you to join us to learn more about God's perfect love for you, and how he uses all the "bad stuff" in your life for your good.

The truth of God's love is not that He allows bad things to happen, it's his promise that he will be there with us – when they do.

Janette Oke

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.

September 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.

- September 4 – Thirteenth Sunday Pentecost: Put Down What You Love; Pick Up What You Hate

- September 11 – Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost: The Found Are Left; The Lost Are Found
- September 18 – Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost: Serve God With Money; You Cannot Serve God And Money
- September 25 – Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost: What Seems To Help In Life Fails In Death; What Seems To Fail In Life Helps In Death

Church Picnic

A church picnic will be held on Sunday, September 11th, at 11:30 a.m. Pulled pork sandwiches, juice and water and tableware will be provided. Members are asked to bring a side dish and/or dessert to pass. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex if you plan to attend.

Sunday School Classes

Instruction in Bible history will begin on Sunday, September 11th.

Confirmation Classes

Instruction in God's Word following the outline of the Small Catechism will begin on September 7th. On that night, we will begin with a meeting with parents and children at 6:30 p.m. Parents, watch for a letter toward the end of the month for more details.

Wednesday Bible Class

We'll start a new series of studies on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. on September 7th. We will be studying the text of the creation account, as well as other pertinent Scriptures. As we do, we will also dig into how science is not at odds with God's creative act. We will learn how to answer those who call into question a literal six-day creation by the power of God's Word.

MLC Food Shelf

We will begin collecting food for MLC on September 4th till the 30th. A box and needs list will be placed in the Narthex.

MLC Auxiliary

Will meet Saturday, October 1st. Their purpose is to promote greater interest in MLC, promote Christian fellowship among the women of the WELS, to give financial support to MLC, and to support our MLC family through prayer. This is where all our called workers come from. If you are interested in attending, please contact Jan Krueger. In addition to the meeting, there will be entertainment by the students, morning devotions in the chapel of the Christ, and lunch will be served for a nominal fee in their great cafeteria. Each year the MLC Auxiliary funds projects submitted by college personnel to offset budget expenses. More than \$20,000 each year supports programs across the campus.

Lawnmower

The congregation has purchased a new lawn mower. At the July meeting, the voters approved a recommendation to use \$2300 from the trust fund to help fund the purchase. Additionally funds in the lawnmower fund will be used (currently \$2432). 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.

Church Council Meeting Minutes

July 10, 2022

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

MMSP = Motion Made, Seconded, Passed

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nissen at 10:50 a.m.

Pastor opened with a reading from Hebrews 6: 13-20 followed by the Lord's Prayer.

Agenda: MMSP to accept the agenda as presented.

Secretary's Report: MMSP to accept the minutes from June 12, 2022 council meeting with one correction:

- No report from the Treasurer

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

Chairman's Report: No report.

Elders Report: MMSP to release from membership: Roger and Sue Steinke.

Trustees Report:

- Trustees would like to thank all of the lawn mowing volunteers.
- The parking lot is being sealed and restriped this week.
- Lighting in the sanctuary is being evaluated again.
- Would like to get someone in or rent a scissors lift to replace some lights.
- The a/c in the education wing was repaired, very minimal cost.

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

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

Planned Giving:

- The full committee met on July 6, and Rollie was present as well.
- There were three action items approved by the CPGC to present to the voters:
 - After the oil candles are paid for, any additional memorial funds will be moved to the Trust Fund.
 - \$4,403.15 from Thrivent Choice will be put in the Trust Fund.
 - There was a request from the trustees to provide \$2,300 to support the cost of the new lawn mower. The CPGC recommends using \$2,300 from the Trust Fund to fulfill this request.
- The council passed a motion affirming these three items to be passed on to the voters as presented by CPGC.
- There was much discussion on how to handle the Bailey estate gift. As it has a designation of "General Support," the CPGC feels this does not fall under their purview, as the CPGC guidelines state the CPGC handles any undesignated gift.

Pastor's Report:

- Pastor is deliberating the call to St. Peter. Everyone is encouraged to meet with pastor and provide their guidance and counsel.
- Pastor would like to take two weeks of vacation in August, but is having a hard time finding someone to fill in for services during that time. Pastor will keep us updated.
- Wednesday Bible school is going well, and it is fun to see the children interact outside of church.

OLD BUSINESS AND ACTION COMMITTEES

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

AV Committee:

- They have a quote for the audio.
- There are still a couple of options that are being deliberated for the visual displays.

Project List:

- Replace lawnmower shed (2023)
- 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.

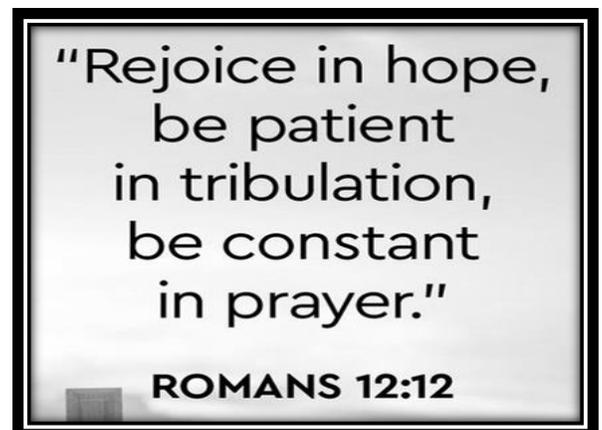
Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- July 17, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. voters' meeting
- August 14, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. council meeting
- September 11, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. council meeting

Meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Closed with the blessing.

Respectfully,
Jay Remmele, Recording Secretary



SPOTLIGHTING Our Members



Dorene Miller has been a member of Immanuel since 1973. She came from St. Matthews in Danube, where she was baptized and confirmed by Pastor Engel's grandpa. When she first came to Immanuel, she helped by teaching Sunday school for many years and helped with the birthday parties for Jesus. She has always been a member of our ladies' group, serving coffee, and helping with funerals when she can. She supports the LWMS and MLC.

Dorene will be married 50 years in March to the love of her life Dick. They have three sons, Rick, Jeremy and Trevor, who are each married. They also have eight grandsons, and in December she will be a great grandma.

Dorene enjoys spending time with family and friends, fishing, camping, traveling, crafts, and gardening. She is a sub Para at NL/S and Willmar schools working with special needs students, which she finds to be a very rewarding job to know she can make a difference.

Dorene values her faith and trusts in God that he will always be with her and he will help her through any pain or troubles she may be having. Having her faith and trusting and believing God is with her fills her heart with peace.



2022 Women's Ministry Conference Recap

The WELS Women's Ministry Conference was held July 21-23 at Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, WI. More than 330 women attended to learn how to identify barriers that get in the way of knowing our purpose, stand firm on Scripture in the face of conflict, and extend grace in their everyday relationships.

The theme of the conference, "Won to be One," dug deeply into the book of Ephesians and God's grace that gives us our identity in Christ. "As a woman, I constantly ask what my role is in the church and in the ministry. I cannot be a pastor and I am not a teacher, so how can I be an asset to my congregation and to the church of Christ as a whole? This conference puts the Great Commission in the forefront of everything and refocused our place and identity as ambassadors of Christ. We minister in everything we say and in all we do," Janet Block, member at New Hope, West Melbourne, FL says.

Professor Paul Wendland conveyed in his "Know the Love Too Big To Know" presentation that Ephesians 1 and 3 are where Paul gives us God's perspective on our purpose grounded in his grace. In his great mercy God lifts us high above the world of incidents and accidents and into the heart of his eternal loving purpose for us in Christ Jesus. This love makes us one again—with God and with each other.

"In his presentation 'United in One as One,' based on Ephesians 2, Pastor Ben Kratz reminds us the world, our own sinful flesh, and the devil will constantly tell us lies about who we are and what our purpose is. We cannot keep listening to those lies. The only place we find truth is God's word. God tells me, 'You are my child,' and this truth tells me his love does not depend on me. This is what unites us. We are united in one Savior who gives us our identity," says Paula Sulzle, member of the Women's Ministry executive committee.

Pastors Snowden Sims and Ryan Kolander showed how unity in Christ and in mission are hard work, but God's plan for ministry opens unexpected doors for opportunity through his grace.

Professor Tingting Schwartz shared her "Journey to belong" and how she learned that her Christian identity unifies her other identities of being an immigrant, a mother, and an educator.

Tara Dezso, member from Shepherd of the Hills, Tucson, AZ, was thankful for these scriptural reminders from Ephesians. She says, "There just have been so many lessons I've taken away from the general sessions, the breakout sessions, that I can apply to my life. When I go back home, it's just going to be incredible."

For the past 20 years WELS Women's Ministry has nurtured, encouraged, and equipped women to faithfully use their gifts for joyful service in God's kingdom. WELS Women's Ministry is part of the WELS Commission on Discipleship.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



The grass withers,
the flower fades,
but the word of
our God
will stand forever.

ISAIAH 40:8, ESV