

## NEWSLETTER

**Build on Solid Rock**

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**UPCOMING DATES**

May 5  
Elders Meeting

May 9  
Ascension Vespers

May 12  
Council Meeting

If you had to evacuate your home because of rising water following severe storms, imagine how difficult it would be to return and assess the damage: muddy floors, moldy walls, and worldly possessions headed for a dumpster. It would be emotionally devastating to observe the physical destruction that the waters caused. It would also pose spiritual dangers that would threaten to cause more spiritual destruction than the physical destruction of that flood. Satan would use the disaster to plant seeds of doubt in your mind: "Why would a God of love allow this? Did you do something wrong for God to treat you like this? Does the fact that your house was damaged more than your unbelieving neighbor's house mean that God must be angry with you? Will a God who so quickly allowed you to lose your earthly possessions really help you in the future?"

Jesus told a story about building on a location to avoid destruction. He compared a wise builder and a foolish one. The foolish builder built his house on a nice sandy stretch by the water. It was a beautiful place to live until the storm hit. There was no defense against the rising waters—a complete loss (maybe even a loss of life!). In contrast, there was a wise builder. He built his house in the hills; he spent the extra time and money to firmly position it on solid rock. It was worth it. The building remained high above the floodwaters and stood strong against the wind.

Jesus' short story speaks volumes for our lives. He wants us to think carefully about the foundation on which we build our lives. It needs to be strong when life's storms strike. When the company is downsized, we want the strength to keep a positive outlook. When conflict loosens family ties, we want tight knots to hold it together. When we've really messed up, the guilt must not sweep us away. When bad news comes, there needs to be rock-like endurance to get us through. When they take our goods, fame, child and wife, faith must not give way to despair. When Satan comes with his inevitable lies, there must be truth that prevails against his falsehoods. On what truths will we build our lives?

There's much advice today about successfully building our lives: build up a network of reliable family and friends, develop more of a positive attitude, get different forms of insurance for rainy days, and pursue proven avenues of achievement. But in the end, they're all "sand foundations." The storms that overwhelm human hearts and hopes are far too violent. We need something stronger to build on.

Jesus tells us to build our lives and futures on the solid rock of his Word. It takes time and effort to build that way, but Jesus says it's worth it. It isn't easy to build our lives on the solid footing and foundation of Christ's Word. Hearing of his sacrifice on the cross brings us the lasting peace that we're forgiven. Hearing that Jesus rose and ascended to rule over all things gives us firm hope in the midst of life's uncertainties.

Don't build your life on shifting sand. Build on solid rock. That's Jesus. His teachings give you the strongest foundation for life. Confidently build your life on him. Build up walls that are solidly connected to the foundation of your baptism. Raise structures firmly grounded in the Sacrament of Jesus' own body and blood. Construct buildings wisely and prudently as you receive the gifts of Christ in the Service. Establish your spiritual home as you apply truths learned during Bible study. Christ, his Word and his Sacraments are your sure foundation and every other is shifting sand.

*Jesus said, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock" -- Matthew 7:24,25*

## May Worship

St. Paul writes, “Christ has *indeed* been raised from the dead.” Big word: *Indeed!* Paul is stressing that we must not think of Jesus’ resurrection like a happy ending to another epic fable. The resurrection is not legend. It really happened. Easter is not just a holiday. Easter is history. On time’s infinite line, Jesus’ resurrection is the punctiliar moment that defines reality for us all. If Christ remained dead, he is a fraud and failure. But Jesus is exactly what he claimed to be—the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

The greatest theologian of the early church, Augustine, called the season of Easter “a joyful week of weeks”—seven wonderful weeks, each seven glorious days long. In this glorious season, let us meditate upon the breath-taking implications of the resurrection reality.

- May 5<sup>th</sup> – Sixth Sunday of Easter – The Risen Savior Gives Love In His Friends
- May 9<sup>th</sup> – The Ascension of Our Lord – The Risen Savior Is Closer Than Ever
- May 12<sup>th</sup> – Seventh Sunday of Easter – The Risen Savior Gives Protection And Hope
- May 19<sup>th</sup> – Day of Pentecost – The Risen Savior Has Not Left Us Alone
- May 26<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday after Pentecost: Holy Trinity – Only A Triune God Can Deliver What Only A Triune God Can Offer

## Ascension Day Vespers and Notes

When the church gathers in Jesus’ name, it regularly remembers his Ascension. The words “He ascended into heaven” are found in each of the three ecumenical creeds we use to confess our Christian faith. The church also sets aside a day each year on which this important event takes center stage. All of this is for good reason. Jesus’ Ascension marked the fact that his work was complete. The high priests of the Old Testament were always on their feet, since more sacrifices were always needed for more sins. Jesus, however, was able to sit down after offering his life as a sacrifice for sin. This sitting at the right hand of God is a permanent reminder that the work of our redemption is finished (Hebrews 10:11-14). At the same time, Jesus’ Ascension also marked the fact that his work was just beginning. The good news of our redemption is to be taken to the ends of the earth. This is the assignment Jesus gave to his church before ascending to the right hand of God. We will celebrate our Lord’s ascension on May 9<sup>th</sup> with a Vespers service starting at 7:00 p.m.

## Sunday School

The last Sunday of Sunday School for the spring will be May 19<sup>th</sup>. We give thanks for our teachers and music leaders who served our children this year.

## Season of Pentecost Divine Service Themes

The phrase “from the top down” is often used to denote a hierarchical system of management or governance. The will and beliefs and directives of those “at the top” are imposed—sometimes aggressively, sometimes even oppressively—on those below. From the top town.

On May 26<sup>th</sup> we enter the second half of the Church Year, the half that focuses on the teachings of the Christian faith. We will see that Christianity is very much a top-down faith. Christian teachings come “from the top down,” but not in the sense that those teachings are oppressively imposed on us. When we call Christianity a “top-down faith,” we mean that it tells us things about God that are so beautiful and good—teachings that couldn’t possibly have originated from human thinking. The Christian faith contains teachings that are so wonderful that we would never even believe them unless God himself revealed their truthfulness to us. So, God sent his Spirit from heaven to earth—from the top down—to empower his children to believe that which would otherwise be totally unbelievable.

## Summer Schedule

Our summer schedule will begin starting May 26<sup>th</sup>. Service time will remain the same. A short family Bible class will be held after treats and coffee. The first Thursday evening service will be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. The Thursday service is the same as the Sunday that follows it. The final Thursday service of the summer will be on August 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Christian Life Ministries Baby Bottle Fundraiser

We will again do the baby bottle fundraiser for Christian Life Ministries beginning Mother’s Day, May 12<sup>th</sup> to Father’s Day, June 16<sup>th</sup>. You can either take a baby bottle home or give a donation, writing a check to Immanuel with Christian Life Ministries on the memo line.



Emma Berg, from DeForest, WI will spend the summer at Immanuel and teach piano, beginning organ and voice lessons. See the note from Emma in this newsletter. A letter will be mailed to our parents in May to share more information. Music lessons and our Bible Academy will begin in June.

# Church Council Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2024

**Members Present:** Rollie Nissen, Jim Buffington, Ross Malkuch, Kent Larson, Aaron Buppenhoff, Pastor Engel, Jay Remmele

**MMSP = Motion Made, Seconded, Passed**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Nissen at 11:20 a.m.

Opened the Lord's Prayer.

**Agenda:** MMSP to accept the agenda as presented.

**Secretary's Report:** MMSP to accept the minutes from February 11, 2024 council meeting as presented.

## Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

**Chairman's Report:** No report

**Elders Report:** Have met and discussed current topics and issues

**Trustees Report:** The new vacuum has been picked up.

**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:** No report. The next quarterly meeting is in May.

## **Pastor's Report:**

- Pastor will be meeting with Emma to set plans for the summer music program
- Pastor will leave Easter afternoon and be gone until that Friday for the ministry retreat
- Pastor will attend the Pastor Conference April 8 through April 11 in St. Louis

## Old Business and Action Committees

**AV Committee:** Ordered the hardware to make it easier to display media on the TVs.

## New Business

Easter Breakfast:

- Aaron will get most of the ingredients
- Meet on Saturday at 9 am to prepare.
- Scott will be at church Sunday morning before six to start the eggs.

## **Upcoming Meeting Dates:**

- April 14, 2024 at 11:30 am council meeting
- May 12, 2024 at 11:30 am council meeting
- June 9, 2024 at 10:30 am council meeting

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m..

Closed with the blessing.

Respectfully,

Jay Remmele, Recording Secretary

## Facebook

If you use Facebook, please like and share Immanuel's posts when you see them so that they will be seen by more people.

## Volunteers

We are in need of some volunteers for the following: giving rides to church on Sunday, 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.

## Mother's Day

As we give thanks to God for his gift of mothers, consider the following:

Now observe that when that clever harlot, our natural reason (which the pagans followed in trying to be most clever), takes a look at married life, she turns up her nose and says, "Alas, must I rock the baby, wash its diapers, make its bed, smell its stench, stay up nights with it, take care of it when it cries, heal its rashes and sores, and on top of that care for my wife, provide for her, labor at my trade, take care of this and take care of that, do this and do that, endure this and endure that, and whatever else of bitterness and drudgery married life involves? What, should I make such a prisoner of myself? O you poor, wretched fellow, have you taken a wife? Fie, fie upon such wretchedness and bitterness! It is better to remain free and lead a peaceful, carefree life; I will become a priest or a nun and compel my children to do likewise."

What then does Christian faith say to this? It opens its eyes, looks upon all these insignificant, distasteful, and despised duties in the Spirit, and is aware that they are all adorned with divine approval as with the costliest gold and jewels. It says, "O God, because I am certain that thou hast created me as a man and hast from my body begotten this child, I also know for a certainty that it meets with thy perfect pleasure. I confess to thee that I am not worthy to rock the little babe or wash its diapers, or to be entrusted with the care of the child and its mother. How is it that I, without any merit, have come to this distinction of being certain that I am serving thy creature and thy most precious will? O how gladly will I do so, though the duties should be even more insignificant and despised. Neither frost nor heat, neither drudgery nor labor, will distress or dissuade me, for I am certain that it is thus pleasing in thy sight."

(Luther, Martin: Pelikan, Jaroslav Jan (Hrsg.) ; Oswald, Hilton C. (Hrsg.) ; Lehmann, Helmut T. (Hrsg.): *Luther's Works, Vol. 45 : The Christian in Society II*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1999, c1962 (Luther's Works 45), S. 45:39-40)



Hello, Parents and Families!

I am so thrilled to begin working with your children this summer through Immanuel's summer music program! My name is Emma Berg, and I am a current student at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. I have completed four out of my five years at MLC and will complete my student-teaching experiences next school year. I am a double major in Elementary Education and Secondary Education, emphasizing Vocal Music. When I graduate in May of 2025, I will be licensed to teach in the general education classroom from K-8 and vocal music from K-12.

At MLC, I have been blessed to continue my musical studies in my classes and extracurriculars. I have taken four years of organ lessons: two years with Mrs. Joyce Schubkegel and two years with Mrs. Kate Carlovsky. While I am still most comfortable with piano, my organ skills will continue to improve with practice and experience. I have taken voice lessons for four years with Ms. Jenny Haugen, and learning from her has been such a joy and blessing. Along with the voice lessons, I've taken a vocal pedagogy course to further my understanding of the science behind the human voice. I've also had the blessing of being a part of College Choir at MLC and have toured many states, sharing the Gospel in song with many of our sisters and brothers in Christ.

I pray that God will continue to use my gifts to his glory as I work with your children this summer. I will be offering private voice, piano, and beginning organ lessons to any students who want to learn and grow in these areas. All levels are welcome, especially those who are just starting. I will be running Immanuel's VBS this summer as well. Please consider signing your children (or yourself) up for these lessons!

Music is a wonderful gift, and I cannot wait to experience it together this summer. Sing to the Lord a new song! Soli Deo Gloria!

Blessings,

Emma Berg

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## A Mothers' Day Hymn and Prayer

For Christian mothers, thank you, Lord  
Who teach your lambs your precious Word.  
For selfless love and faithful care,  
We praise you Lord for mothers, dear.  
They seek not glory, honor, fame  
But humble service in your name.

Teach them, O Lord, that they may be  
A blessing to the family.  
Send peace and love to them from heav'n  
And all your gifts so freely giv'n.  
Keep mothers faithful, Lord, and strong  
Until they join the heav'nly throng.

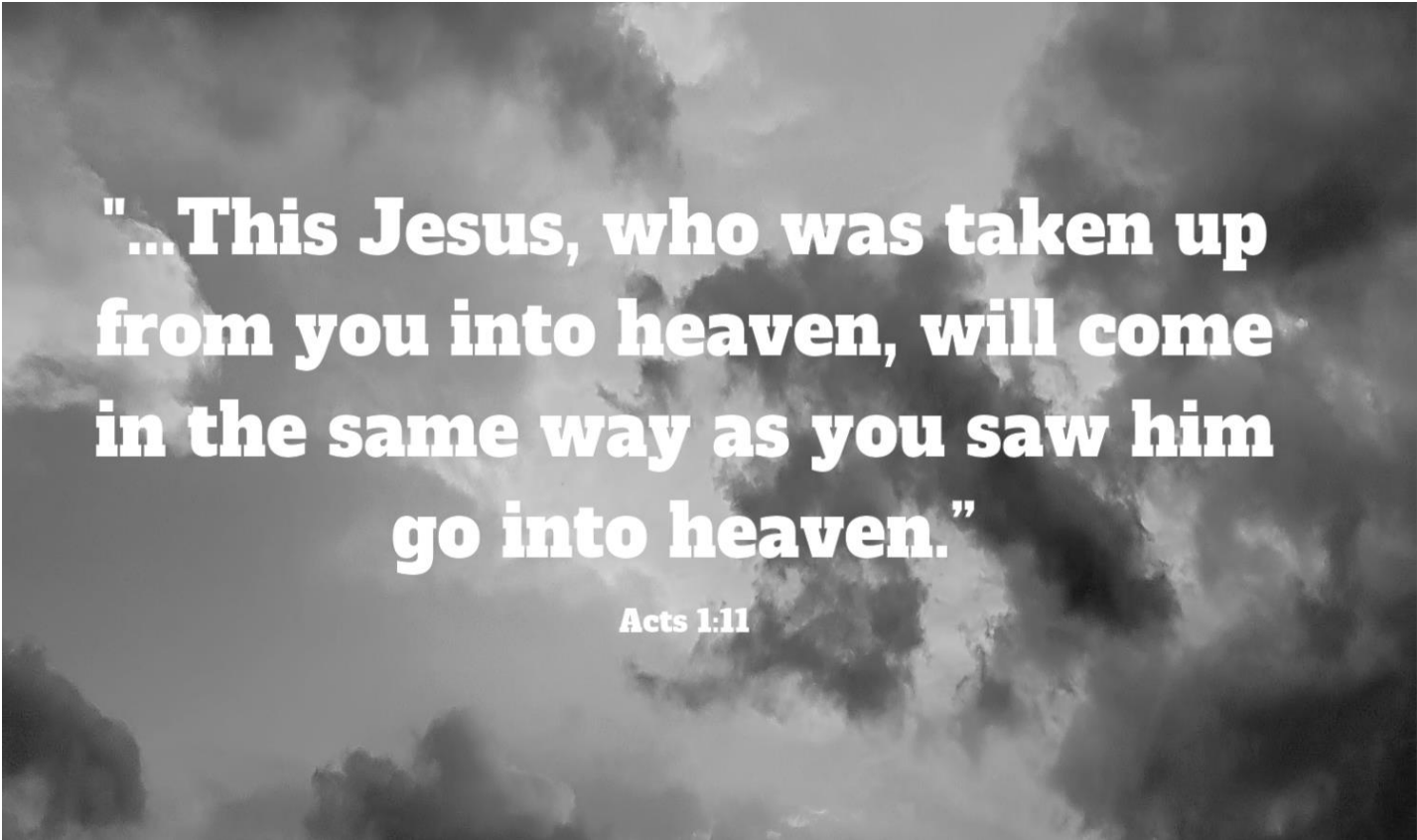
If all their efforts seem but loss  
Direct them to their Savior's cross.  
When guilt and fear and shame set in  
Assure them then of sins forgiv'n.  
Thus strengthened by your holy Word,  
Refreshed again to serve you Lord.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**"...This Jesus, who was taken up  
from you into heaven, will come  
in the same way as you saw him  
go into heaven."**

**Acts 1:11**