

NEWSLETTER

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## UPCOMING DATES

June 7  
Elders

June 14  
Church Council



## The Means of Grace— The Means by Which God Shows Us His Grace and Gives Us His Grace

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. 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.

*You have been born again,  
not of perishable seed, but  
of imperishable, through  
the living and enduring  
word of God.*

*~1 Peter 1:23*

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. 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.

(Daniel Deutschlander, *On Giving Advice to God*, pp.55-57)

## Teacher Assignment

Teacher Emma Berg, who served at Immanuel during the summer of 2024, was reassigned to Great Plains Lutheran High School for a second year. It is a one-year assignment. Please pray for God's blessings on Emma as she begins her second year at GPLHS.

## Summer Bible Class Series

Our Bible class series for the summer is entitled: Treasures from the Text. Each week will examine one or more of the readings for the day in greater detail than the Divine Service allows. Join us as we dig deeper into God's Word each week.

## Season of Pentecost Divine Service Themes

The Season after Pentecost features what Christ teaches, and Christians in every vocation are encouraged to say it out loud. The truths of God's Word are good for the soul, useful for life, and more reliable than anything else in the world. Watch out for false teachers who come with wise sounding words and pious promises, but who do not base everything on the Word of God! Give thanks to the Lord for faithful servants in the ministry of the gospel and those who support them!



*The righteous man walks in his integrity; His children are blessed after him.*

*--Proverbs 20:7*

## June Worship:

- June 7th – Second Sunday after Pentecost – God Loves Sinners
- June 14th – Third Sunday after Pentecost – Jesus Leads Us
- June 21st – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – Keep the Faith
- June 28th -- Fifth Sunday after Pentecost – Love God above All

## Minnesota District Convention

In the years that there is not a synod convention, our district has a meeting where all of the congregations in the district send their called workers and one lay delegate to discuss the work of the synod. Aaron Buppenhoff and pastor will attend this meeting on June 9th and 10th at Martin Luther College in New Ulm.

## Summer Schedule

Service time on Sundays remain the same. A short family Bible class will be held after treats and coffee. Thursday evening services will be held at 7:00 p.m. and is the same as the Sunday that follows it.

## Christian Life Ministries Baby Bottle Fundraiser

We are currently participating in the baby bottle fundraiser for Christian Life Ministries. 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. Please return your donations by June 14th.

## Community Lunch

As in the past three summers, the evangelism committee will host a community lunch. We have not yet set the day and time. We will be looking for some volunteers to help by making cookies, serving, setting up, and cleaning up. Watch the bulletin for more information. Please talk to pastor if you have any questions.

## 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 Matt Sindelir or Jim Buffington.

## A Meditation on the Address of the Lord's Prayer

Written by Professor Em. Daniel Deutschlander and adapted for use at Immanuel.

### The Address: *Our Father who art in heaven*

Father, dear Father! That's what I dare to call you. For out of your inestimable grace and mercy it has pleased you to call me your child. In spite of the sin and shame in which I was conceived and born, you adopted me to be your own. Yes, and you did it not by laying aside your own holiness. You did it by sending your only begotten Son to bear my sin and shame and then to wash it all way in the sacred flood of Baptism. Purchased by his blood, washed and reclaimed by your free grace in the Sacrament, I now dare to call you *Father, dear Father*.

And such a Father you are! You dwell in heaven, high above all earthly toil and turmoil. Over it all you reign and rule. So exalted and powerful are you that I, your child and a joint heir with your beloved Son, my Savior, need fear nothing in time or in eternity. You will not and can never abandon or forsake me. Too precious was the price you paid for my redemption, too dear the blood that bought me.

Yes, Father, dear Father, you who inhabit the praises of the saints and angels in heaven, you bring me a glimpse of your glory in heaven even now. For where is there a heaven on earth? It is not in perishing wealth or fleeting popularity. It is not in perfect health that one day is here and tomorrow gone. It is not in any earthly joy or success or prosperity, as thankful as I am to you for these when you send them. No, you give me a glimpse of heaven whenever you draw near to me in your Word and sacraments. There I see Jesus, my brother. There I hear his sweet voice assuring me that all of his holiness is mine when sin is forgiven. There I see him when he comes with his own true body and blood to feed my soul that longs alone for his presence. There he raises me up with the assurance that those who come to him he will never, no never cast out.

As an earthly father disciplines his children when they misbehave, so you also show your love by discipline when I stray from humble obedience to your Word. Ah, but this is my comfort in the suffering that you send to me as a result of my sins: You never send the full consequences of my sin, else I would perish forever. You chasten me neither too much nor too little as an earthly father often does. You are not fickle or arbitrary in your fatherly acts in my life. Always you are the perfect Father, the Father who sees everything, knows everything and then acts in love to bring me to repentance and to draw me ever closer to you. What an amazing thing that is! With all world before you, the great and the small, the pious and the wicked, you never run out of time or wisdom or energy to act as my heavenly Father!

What a delight then it is for me to address you, Father, dear Father, you who are in heaven and you who by Word and sacraments brings heaven so close to me. Unseen and veiled is now the view. But that does not make it any less real. And so, prompted by your Word and trusting in your promise, I dare to claim you as my Father and to now draw near to you, exalted as you are in the heaven above the heavens. For as far as that may be, you are nevertheless as near as your Word and promise on which I rely and in which I place my trust. So then, dear Father, hear me as I pray.

FINANCIAL REPORT					
January 1st through April 30th, 2026					
GENERAL FUND					
January 1st				April 30th	
Balance	Contributions	Expenditures		Balance	
\$ 57,257	\$ 78,193	\$ 81,628		\$ 53,822	
WELS CONGREGATIONAL MISSION OFFERING		MLC - CONGREGATIONAL PARTNER GRANT		LUTHERAN INSTITUTIONAL MINISTRY ASSOCIATION (LIMA)	
2026 Commitment	Year to Date Contributions	2026 Commitment	Year to Date Contributions	2026 Commitment	Year to Date Contributions
\$ 34,000	\$ 13,284	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,255	\$ 2,200	\$ 466
Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions	Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions	Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions
\$ 2,833	\$ 3,321	\$ 133.33	314	\$ 183	\$ 117

## QR Code for Online Giving



# Church Council Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2026

**Members Present:** Jim Buffington, Aaron Buttenhoff, Matt Sindelir, Pastor, Scott Claussen, Todd Marxhausen, Michael Ziebell

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

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 11:37 a.m.

Opened with the Lord's Prayer.

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

**Secretary's Report:** MMSP to accept the March 8, 2026 council minutes as presented.

## Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

**Chairman's Report:** No report.

### **Elders Report:**

- MMSP to release from membership Clara Fabrizius.
- Confirmation Day – April 26<sup>th</sup>
- Ascension Day – May 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday Divine Services begin on May 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Summer schedule begins May 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **Trustees Report:**

- Trustees had a repairman work on the old refrigerator and determined it would be cost prohibitive to fix. A new refrigerator was purchased and installed.
- Trustees are still trying to determine if they can use the existing rail for the partition between the fellowship and youth room or if a new rail must be installed with a new partition.
- Discussion on a new bulletin board and location. It was decided to ask a church member for assistance.
- A painter looked at the wax on the wall behind the altar in the sanctuary and thought he would be able to patch the paint so it would match. The painter looked at the basement walls and thought he could fix the water spots.

**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 Committee Report:**

- Committee recommended transferring \$3,648 from CPGC account to the Trust Fund.
- Recommended transferring \$115 from memorials into the Trust Fund.
- \$6,165.74 was transferred from the Endowment Fund to the Trust Fund. This is 4% of the past four year rolling average of the Immanuel Endowment Fund per guidelines.

## **Church IT/AV Committee:**

- New HDMI splitter was ordered.
- Committee is looking at upgrading new church software and computers on the same timeline.

**Pastor's Report:** The three congregations on Highway 212 are holding meetings to discuss combining into one church in Renville. Voting on combining will take place April 19<sup>th</sup>. If approved, the new congregation would begin service on the first Sunday of February 2027. Please keep them in your prayers.

## Old Business and Action Committees

### New Business

Church cleanup is scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m.

### **Upcoming Meeting Dates:**

- May 10, 2026 after Bible class
- June 14, 2026 after Bible class
- July 12, 2026 after Bible class

Meeting adjourned at 12:11 p.m.

Respectfully,  
Scott Claussen, Recording Secretary

## **A Prayer for Christian Fathers**

For Christian fathers, thank you, Lord  
Who lead their sons to Christ's sure Word  
And daughters to the Scriptures true  
Wherein they all are led to you.  
As leaders in their households, they  
Seek your redeeming grace each day.

They toil, they tire, their strength wears thin  
Their consciences seared by their sin.  
They come before your holy throne  
And plead no merit of their own.  
And claiming Jesus' royal dress  
They plead his holy righteousness.

Your Word, your law, your gospel, Lord  
A light to them in this dark world.  
Convicts, then comforts, then empow'rs  
To serve you gladly all their hours.  
A Christ-like love they strive to share  
With those entrusted to their care.

And when the hour of death draws near  
Their souls uplift, their burdens clear.  
Assure them that the time is planned  
When they around Christ's throne will stand.  
Eternity, with you above  
For you first shared the Father's love.

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

*As a father shows compassion  
to his children, so the LORD shows  
compassion to those who fear him.*



**PSALM 103:13, ESV**