

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

NEWSLETTER

The Festival of the Reformation

Do you catch the arrogance of anyone who insists that, instead of what God says, what we say should determine truth: "If God would just listen to us, then all would be well and he could live among us in this man-made house of peace"? Yes, and just as bad, do you see the wickedness of declaring a limit to how much of God's Word we will accept or teach or consider important? Indeed, this last may be the worst of all; for by teaching just some, be it a little or a lot of God's Word, many are seduced into thinking that we are free to pick and choose where God's Word might be right or wrong—we ultimately get to be our own bible! Is that not blasphemous? Would a government put up with such a perverse notion: "Here's the law; do whatever you please with it! Obey what you like and ignore the rest!" There are a lot of people in prison who cherished just such a foolish notion. But God who is almighty—should he endure such an insult?

Is it not clear that Thus says the LORD! is largely missing from much of what calls itself the "church," the house of the Lord on earth? The errors of Rome in Luther's day haven't gone away. Rome still teaches what it did back then about purgatory and indulgences—though fewer and fewer Catholics may realize it. Today many non-Catholic church bodies have gone just as far from the Scriptures and some even further in their denial of biblical teaching. Just consider for a moment what so many modern self-appointed builders of God's house have as the foundation for their "faith traditions," their house of opinion. What do they teach? Do they teach that Jesus is the one and only and all-sufficient Savior? Certainly not! They teach that the way to heaven is whatever way you choose; if you think Christ began the work, that's fine. If you think that he didn't even begin it but that he was just a noble teacher of a higher morality, that's fine too. If you think that, to some extent, man must earn his way to heaven, that's okay. If you have decided that ultimately, if there is a heaven, everybody will end up there, well, that too is alright. If you come to the conclusion that our heaven and hell is of our own making here in this life and that death ends all, well, we can work with that idea too.

In fact, there are just a very few left who have as their foundation: Scripture alone, grace alone, faith alone—the three great watchwords of the Reformation. If anything, a recommitment to the truths of the Scriptures restored at the time of the Reformation is more necessary today than it ever was!

Where, then, should we begin if we want to dwell in a house of God's own building? Where else but there where God has said he wants to dwell. He hasn't left it up to us. He declares, "But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word." And who is it that is humble in spirit? How can I tell if I am one of them? Take the pattern of Samuel who, when he was still a boy, declared, Speak Lord; your servant is listening! Take the model of the virgin Mary who, at the shocking announcement of the angel that she was to be the mother of her Savior and ours, declared, May it be to me according to your word! The humble in spirit do not invent doctrines. The humble in spirit do not presume to tell God, "Well, this much of your Word I'll listen to and accept, but the rest just doesn't fit my way of thinking, so it will have to go. Maybe I won't outright deny it; I'll just not make an issue of it." That's the opposite of humble in spirit.

And who is it that is contrite in spirit? It is the one who listens to the shattering voice of the law that condemns all of our nature and our own righteousness. It is the one who confesses with Luther's echo of the apostles and prophets in the Bible; with them he taught that we all are by nature lost and condemned creatures; we cannot even believe God's Word and embrace Jesus' saving work without the miracle of faith created by God himself through his Word and sacraments. Yes, and wonder of wonders, such a contrite spirit is at

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UPCOMING DATES

October 4
Elders

October 7
Women of Immanuel

October 11
Church Council



the same time one that rejoices with joy unbounded. For the faith created by God's gospel message declares that our sins have been fully paid for by Jesus. Such a faith delights in the sure and certain promises of God in his Word that by faith, we are adopted sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of one another and of Christ himself. Such a faith doesn't want to claim any merit of its own; it is altogether content and most happy indeed to claim the perfect merit that Jesus gives to us in the Word and sacraments. Yes, a humble and contrite spirit trembles at the prospect of losing any part of God's Word to arrogant and fallen human opinion.

Thus our celebration of the Reformation is a celebration of what God has done for us in Christ and in us through his pure Word. Far be it from us to ever want to depart so much as a hairbreadth from that Word. Does that Word say things at times that hurt our feelings? Of course! So what?! Our feelings are more than salved by the gospel. Does that Word say things at times that fly in the face of fallen reason and majority opinion? Of course! So what?! It is the Word of the God who created all things and who knows all things; to take his Word instead of my own or that of anyone else should seem the obvious choice.

For this is the one on whom God looks; this is where he is pleased to dwell: with the one who despairs of his own merit and by faith embraces the merit of God's own Son, our only Savior. Thus it is with the one who believes and holds fast to all that God, his Creator and Redeemer, has said, even if the whole world thinks it nonsense. Our celebration of the Reformation is our small way of declaring to the whole world that that's where we want to be—in the house God builds, in the church where "thus says the LORD" is everything!

Season of Pentecost Divine Service Themes

On September 27th, we came to the end of series of services under the theme **Unexpected Truth**. We heard that Biblical truth is revealed by God rather than discovered by reason alone. Some truths are obvious to human judgment, but the truths of the Bible are often unexpected.

On October 4th, we will begin our final Sunday series of the church year. It is entitled: **The Beginning Of The End**. The cartoon character holds a sign saying, "The End Is Near." For Christians, this is not a message of fear. Instead, it is a message of watchful hope. Scripture teaches that the End Times began with Christ's first coming, especially his death and resurrection. Christ will come again on judgment day. Now we live in that in-between time, when salvation has been won, but full glory is still to come. It's the beginning of the end.

Jesus himself makes clear that no one knows the day or hour of his return. This uncertainty is not meant to trouble us, but to keep us spiritually awake. Each day becomes an opportunity to live in repentance and faith, turning from sin and trusting fully in Christ's finished work for us.

Our preparation for the end is not about trying to predict signs or earn God's favor. Instead, it is about remaining rooted in Jesus: hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments, and trusting the promises of forgiveness. These are God's ways of keeping us ready.

We are nearing the end of the Church Year. This past year, we have reviewed Jesus' life and teaching. The Scripture readings in these final weeks recall some of the major themes that are woven throughout the Church Year. In this final series we will be looking at those themes with the understanding that that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ's return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

October Worship:

- October 4th – Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – It's Time To Speak Truth
 - Sometimes people get braver when they realize they are nearing the end. They speak things they couldn't or wouldn't say before, even to the powerful, because they realize they have nothing to lose. The message of repentance and forgiveness of sins through Jesus' death on the cross has many powerful enemies. Sometimes those enemies are religious people, rebellious spirits and heretics. Sometimes those enemies are people of this world who worship their own personal desires and glory in their shame.

It doesn't matter how powerful the enemies are. God persists in speaking his truth and drawing our eyes to his Son, who will help us persevere to the end and speak truth.
- October 11th – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost – It's Time To Invite The Unworthy
 - Don't you hate it when someone has prepared an excellent meal, but travel delays mean that certain friends or relatives don't get to enjoy it? Sometimes there are no leftovers, and an opportunity is lost.

God has prepared an extraordinary spiritual meal for all people. It is received by faith. But it is not offered forever. The day will come when body and soul are separated, and those who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior will not share in his blessings. It's the beginning of the end. Now is the time to issue the invitation!



- October 18th – Twenty-First Sunday after Pentecost – It's Time To Give To God What Is God's
 - In the 250th anniversary year of the signing of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America, Americans are realizing that our freedoms are not guaranteed forever. What can we do with the limited time we have left to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments without governmental interference? We can do exactly what Jesus advised, giving to God what is God's. We can thank Jesus for fulfilling all righteousness for us, leaving us free to serve our neighbors. God does not need our good works, but our neighbors do. God's Word informs our choice of political activities as we seek to be faithful to our calling as Christian citizens.
- October 25th – The Festival of the Reformation (Observed) – It's Time To Stay Steadfast
 - Jesus told his followers, "You will be hated by everyone because of me" (Matthew 10:22). So, the time between Christ's first and second coming is going to be perilous for believers. A good example: Martin Luther. All that priest wanted was to share the pure gospel with the world. For trying to do just that, both political and religious leaders wanted to end his life. The Festival of the Reformation emphasizes our unflinching reliance on the Word of God. We give unflinching testimony to that Word even in the face of persecution. Today we pray that the Lord would keep us steadfast in the faith.

Thank You

Thank you to all who participated in the LWMS door offering on September 13th. The total amount was \$708.

Jesus Cares Bible Class Teachers

We will have a Bible class for our Jesus Cares participants from 10:30-11:30 a.m. on Sundays. We are looking for volunteers to take turns teaching. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex and you may pick up which lesson you will be teaching as well. If you would like more information or would like pastor to walk through a lesson with you, please talk to him.

Family Fun at Immanuel

Join us for a late afternoon of Bunco. All ages are welcome - all you need to do is count! Sunday, October 4th at 4:00 p.m. in the church basement. Bring your own beverage and if you wish, a snack to share. See you there!



MLC Food Bank & Auxiliary Meeting

We will be collecting for the MLC Food Bank in October until October 23rd. Please have all items to the church by that date. A table for donated items will be in the narthex. The auxiliary meeting will be Saturday, October 24th. If interesting in attending, please speak to Jan Krueger.

Volunteers to Provide Transportation

We need some more volunteers to give rides to church on Sunday morning. Please talk to pastor if you would be willing to help.

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.

Birthdays

October 2 nd	Judy Field
October 5 th	Jen Heller
October 6 th	Mitch Kremin
October 9 th	Dorene Miller
October 17 th	Lori Dittbenner
October 17 th	Finley Heller
October 17 th	Jon Heller
October 19 th	Dawn Schultz
October 27 th	Adeline Wilms
October 28 th	Myrtiss Riediger

Anniversaries

October 4 th	Ben and Liesl Dols
October 10 th	Gabe and Amanda Okins
October 20 th	Don and Bonnie Watson
October 27 th	Ross and Joanne Malkuch

*"As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night will never cease."
—Genesis 8:22*

Church Council Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2026

Members Present: Jim Buffington, Aaron Butenhoff, Matt Sindelir, Pastor, Scott Claussen, Todd Marxhausen

MMSP = Motion Made, Seconded, Passed

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 10:45 a.m.

Pastor opened with the Lord's Prayer.

Agenda: MMSP to amend the agenda with the additions in new business of appointing someone to the CPGC and addressing the church sign lights.

Secretary's Report: MMSP to accept the July 12, 2026 council minutes with the addition under new business that council can appoint an elder before the voters meeting.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Chairman's Report: No report.

Elders Report: Working on a list to contact members.

Trustees Report:

- A church member is painting the basement.
- Considering a railing for the cement ramp coming out the front door.
- Mowing is going well.
- August 29th is date for dead tree removal.

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 has contacted someone to serve out Michael Ziebell's term.

Church IT/AV Committee:

- Working to integrate with Microsoft OneDrive online.
- Looking into using something other than Quick Books, maybe Concordia.
- Changing accounting software will leave less chance for clerical errors due to automation.
- Working on church microphones.

Pastor's Report:

- Considering different options for delivery of church newsletter due to increasing delivery costs and inefficiencies.
- Pastor will be away on vacation August 23rd.
- Aaron will unlock church on August 13th and 23rd. Scott will unlock church on August 20th.
- Olivia will go back to its regular schedule in September and the new church bylaws are almost done.

Old Business and Action Committees

MMSP to ask and appoint Ron Kluver to serve as an elder.

New Business

- Justin Kannas, Kent Larson, and Jim Buffington were appointed to the budget committee.
- Trustees are looking at improving the spotlight on the church sign outside.

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- September 20, 2026 after Bible class
- October 11, 2026 after Bible class
- November 8, 2026 after Bible class

Pastor closed with blessing and the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully,
Scott Claussen,
Recording Secretary

FINANCIAL REPORT					
January 1st through August 31st, 2026					
GENERAL FUND					
January 1st				August 31st	
Balance	Contributions	Expenditures		Balance	
\$ 57,257	\$ 130,749	\$ 143,055		\$ 44,951	
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	\$ 24,578	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,945	\$ 2,200	\$ 1,753
Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions	Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions	Average Monthly Commitment	YTD Average Monthly Contributions
\$ 2,833	\$ 3,072	\$ 133.33	243	\$ 183	\$ 219

QR Code for Online Giving



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



LET US NOT BECOME
Weary IN DOING GOOD
FOR AT THE PROPER TIME
WE WILL
REAP A *Harvest*
IF WE DO NOT GIVE UP.

Galatians 6:9