

The 2018 Annual Report

Congregation President's Report

Two years ago, you elected me to the Immanuel Council. Last year the Council nominated me for President and then immediately closed the nominations. So, I have been your president for the past year. During that time, we, the congregation have accomplished many things. Unfortunately, the organ was not one of those accomplishments, but we can see the end of the project with great hopes of completion.

With the help of several volunteers under the guidance of Mary Bischel, the beautification at the front entrance to the church was completed. The large overgrown bushes were removed, not without some heavy labor and the tractor supplied by Brian Bischel though. And new smaller shrubs and flowers were put in.

Also, with the help of several volunteers under the guidance of Nick Haas, the area behind the church was cleared out. If you haven't looked back there, you should, it looks great.

There have been other projects completed that will be covered by other reports. But the biggest has been the projection teams upgrade to the projection system. If you remember, we presented a bid to you at the meeting last year, to complete that project, that bid was for about \$65,000. Although the council all decided that an upgrade was needed, there seemed to be no way to fund that kind of an upgrade. After discussing with Don Schlieve and Lauren Likkel, and doing some research to what was available, I proposed to the council that we could get what we needed with a lot of help from volunteers, and most likely under \$12,000. We were able to get that amount from congregation donations, and a grant from the trust fund. With most of the purchasing done, it appears very likely that we will stay under that number, thanks to the hard work of Don Schlieve, Chad Drier, Loren Anderson, and even some from me.

Alan Ludwig
Congregation President

Congregation Statistics for 2018 as reported to the Synod office

Members as of Jan 1, 2018	483	Death	2
Baptized	9	Transfer out	6
Confirmed	8	Adjustments	24
Transfer in	43		
Total Membership as of Dec. 31 2018			503
Average worship attendance combined Sun & Wed			190

Pastor's Report 2018 by Rev. Jamie Brieske

This Changes Everything!

God's grace changes everything. This was the theme of many parts of our ministry at Immanuel in 2018. The Youth Worker's Extravaganza kicked off the year for Alyssa Engedal, our faith formation minister, and myself with this bold statement. In January of last year we took an intensive class preparing for the youth gathering and had our first experience at the E (Extravaganza). It was very fulfilling to spend time with other youth ministers and pastors learning from each other and being inspired to share the gospel with the next generation. Attending this continuing education event helped us plan for the National Youth Gathering in Houston and better prepared us to guide our youth in this life-changing experience.

Attending the Gathering in June was everything we had hoped it would be, a life-changing experience for our youth! They were able to see first hand God's grace in the lives of others through speakers and testimonies. They were able to learn for themselves what God's grace means to each of them personally. They were able to reach out and serve others and be a part of God's living grace in the world. As a pastor, I was honored to accompany our youth in this experience. They are not only the future of the church, they are the church!

This Changes Everything was also the theme for Luther Park over the summer and for our annual VBS at Immanuel. Children were hearing the message of Jesus and learning about how they are loved and forgiven in his name. Thanks to the Immanuel Trust Fund, every child in our congregation received a scholarship to attend camp. Thanks to you, the people of Immanuel, and our general fund, our VBS program is by donation-only, so that no family has to feel strained to bring their child to church. Thanks be to God for your generosity!

Not only were the children, youth, and families changed by God's grace, but this learning shaped our congregation as a whole over the past year. The youth brought back palpable excitement from the trips and camps that translated to energy and growth in the life of the church. We have been blessed by their leadership this year. Our SHYN youth group is growing, our confirmation students are learning, and our children are being loved and encouraged in their Journey of Faith. This is a blessing to everyone here at Immanuel.

In response to God's grace and in efforts to fund our mission to be the Church without Walls, we had a strong emphasis on stewardship this fall. We urged everyone to prayerfully consider their giving to the church through the New Consecration Sunday program that culminated in a Celebration luncheon on November 11th. The stewardship team worked hard to thank everyone for their contributions to the church and challenged everyone to give what they could so that we can do more together than we could ever dream of doing alone.

This fall we also focused on being *Anchored in Faith* as we heard stories from Mark about Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. God's grace changes us. In response to this amazing grace, we live out our call to be disciples in the world. We do not let the waves of this life overwhelm us, because we have a true anchor and source of love and peace in our lives through our Savior Jesus. Our Sunday morning worship was enlivened by the choir, and our Wednesday evening worship was led by Tammie and the praise band.

This year we celebrated 4 weddings, 9 baptisms, 8 confirmations, and 4 funerals as a congregation. It is a blessing to walk with each of you and your families through the highs and lows of your faith journey. I am constantly amazed by how the Holy Spirit leads and guides us through life. God's grace truly changes everything! Thank you for the opportunity to be your pastor. I pray for God's guidance and vision as we embark upon 2019 and all that this year holds for us as a congregation.

2018 Faith Formation Ministry Annual Report

The goal of Faith Formation Ministry at Immanuel is to walk together in fellowship with people of all ages, and to grow together on our life-long journey of faith. We feel that meeting people where they are and forming relationships is a critical way of living out the mission statement of Immanuel, the “Church Without Walls.” We do this in many different ways, including learning together in Journey of Faith (“Sunday school”) and confirmation classes, gathering for High School youth group, fellowship together after worship on Sundays, before worship on Wednesdays, and at many events throughout the year. All of the ministries and events that I facilitate as the Faith Formation Minister are done with the goals of growing in faith and relationship together as priority.

We have a wonderful group of caring volunteers who lead Journey of Faith classes (ages 3 through 5th grade) on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. We have over 40 kids participating in Journey of Faith this year! All of our Journey of Faith kids, as well as any interested middle and high school youth, come together in worship on Sunday mornings at least twice a year for the Advent Celebration Program and a Youth Led Worship service at the end of the school year.

In the summer of 2018, we were again able to host counselors from Luther Park Bible Camp. It was a great way for our kids to get a taste of what Luther Park has to offer, and we had 45 kids participate! A special thank you goes out, again, to all those congregation members who helped to keep the counselors housed and fed while they were here! In addition to hosting counselors here at Immanuel, we also had more than 20 of our youth attend summer camp at Luther Park (thanks in large part to the generosity of the Immanuel Trust Fund.)

In 2018 we had our second summer of Summer Stretch, and had 20 middle school youth participate. Summer Stretch met for 4 days in July – we spent the mornings doing various service projects in & around Eau Claire, and the afternoons doing (top secret) super fun activities. The program ended with a trip to Valley Fair with all of the Summer Stretch participants from all over WI & MN. During the school year, middle school students participate in confirmation classes on Wednesday evenings following worship. They also participate in various service projects (a few examples include packing food for the backpack lunch program at Feed My People, making tags & wrapping gifts for the LSS Giving Tree.) Middle school youth also have the opportunity to participate in the NW Synod Youth Gathering, Christ Jam, which happens each spring in Rice Lake.

The senior high youth group (referred to as “SHYN,” or Senior High Youth Night) was very active in 2018. Our SHYN group has also experienced tremendous growth over the past year or so – we’ve gone from a consistent 4 or 5, to a consistent 15 or more! This amazing growth has meant we have needed to get creative with our meeting space, and have added a couch and a coffee table with hideaway seating to the youth room to try to accommodate all those bodies! SHYN meets for about an hour on Wednesday nights following worship, and do a variety of activities (Bible study, fellowship and conversation, service projects, game nights, etc.) 2018 was a National Youth Gathering year in our summer trip rotation (Adventure Trip, Mission Trip, National Youth Gathering.) There were 16 youth & 3 adults who traveled to Houston, TX and participated in the Gathering, and all of us agreed that it was a life changing and worthwhile experience! The SHYN youth also had the opportunity to participate in several retreats, including the Synod Youth Gathering (“Godstock”) at the Metropolis. We had 12 youth attend the gathering this year, plus Maddy LoRusso, who is the former Synod Youth Board President. While we were at Godstock, 2 of our youth were elected to serve on the Synod Youth Board – congratulations to Aidan Tarpinning & Maija Balts.

Another ongoing ministry at Immanuel is our Milestones Ministry program. This is a unique way of intentionally marking various milestones from birth through end of life, and connecting them with others in our church community. If you are interested in joining us in this effort, please let us know!

Some of the ways we form relationships with one another and grow together are through fun events, focused simply on fellowship together. Each month during the school year we offer a “fun night” that is open to the entire congregation. For many of these events I also send invitations home with all of the Create-A-World Preschool & Camp Create families. Some of our highlights each year are a Halloween party, Immanuel at the Alley (bowling), the Easter Egg-stravaganza, and our Winter Retreat at Luther Park.

Camp Create is a two-year-old day camp ministry program and takes place in the Journey of Faith classrooms & church nursery. This program has grown in ways we never would have imagined when we started in 2016 – we offer to class sessions with up to 10 students in each, and currently have only 1 open space. Camp Create has also proven to be a wonderful “filter” into Create-A-World Preschool, as well. Registration for next year is just around the corner, so we are excited to see what the new school year will bring!

As always, Faith Formation Ministry is an evolving, changing, and moving ministry at Immanuel and we are always dreaming big and watching for where the Holy Spirit is pushing us. If you have any big dreams for Faith Formation, please share them with myself or Pastor Jamie any time!

Alyssa Engedal, Faith Formation Minister

Immanuel’s JONAH highlights for 2018 Celebrating 11 Years in the Chippewa Valley

Our Mission: JONAH-Joining Our Neighbors, Advancing Hope-is a grassroots organization, comprised primarily of diverse faith communities, that seeks to bring people in the Chippewa Valley together and empower one another to build a healthier and fairer community for us all. Since its formation in 2007, JONAH has organized diverse people around common values. We have identified some of those common values as: belief in the infinite dignity and worth of every human life, understanding that “we’re all in this together,” support for justice and liberation in opposition to all forms of oppression and inequity, belief that we are responsible for stewardship of the natural world, an ethic of shared abundance, and trust in the triumph of love and hope over cynicism, hate and fear.

JONAH Faith Community Members: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Eau Claire Hebrew Congregation, Eau Claire Catholic Deanery (9 parishes), First Congregational United Church of Christ, Spirit Lutheran Church, First Presbyterian Church of Eau Claire, Grace Lutheran Church, Eau Claire Friends (Quakers), Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Unity Christ Center, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Hope Methodist Church.

JONAH Task Forces: Affordable Housing Task Force, Eco-Spirituality Work Group, Immigration Task Force, Criminal Justice Reform Team, Chippewa Valley Transit Alliance, Advancing Hope Fund, Religious Leaders, EXPO (Ex-Prisoners Organizing).

Immanuel Hosted: The Mexican Consulate Mobile visit to help over 125 Mexican citizens in our area with legal paperwork, passports, and consular id’s; Conversations with local law enforcement leaders and Hispanic residents and business leaders; 1st Annual Neighborhood Fiesta attended by over 150 of our Immanuel neighbors; Adult Forums on various community actions; JONAH leadership trainings; meetings of EXPO (Ex-Prisoners Organizing), JONAH Religious Leaders, JONAH Board of Directors meetings, Immigration Task Force.

Participated in: Conversations and involvement with local discussions on Affordable Housing; Evolving Strategic Partnerships with Chippewa Valley EXPO (Ex-Prisoners Organizing), Public Health communities, UWEC, Clear Vision Eau Claire, and Citizen Action of Wisconsin Cooperative; candidate forums; local discussions and workshops on racism, poverty, criminal justice reform, religious tolerance, health care, homelessness, and immigration issues in the Chippewa Valley.

Continuing: Conversations with one another and beyond our walls to see how we can, with God, answer God’s call to reclaim, repair, and restore our broken world.

Food Ministry

This past year the Immanuel Pantry made a few changes to better serve people who are struggling with food insecurities. In September we changed our pantry hours to offer an evening time. We are one of two pantries to be open during the evening. We are also open Thursday and Friday mornings. Again, our pantry is only one of two to be open on a Friday. According to our statistics we are serving 10 more families per month in 2018 than in 2017 and the number of senior citizens has increased as well. During the summer we were able to offer fresh fruits and vegetables. Thank you to all the volunteers making pick-ups, sorting and helping our guests each week with produce.

In September Immanuel hosted the Mexican Consulate. Our food pantry was able to provide food for all who came through our doors that day.

A huge Thank You to the volunteers who greet and welcome our guest. During Thanksgiving we were able to hand out 20 Thanksgiving Baskets. Thank you to Sue Luthy for the Thrivent Action Team dollars to help with purchasing food. Thank you to Immanuel for donating food!

During the School year we financially support and deliver weekend meals to South Middle School. Volunteers also deliver to Meadowview Elementary School. We are proud to support our youth in this capacity!

Caring Ministries

Along with administrative duties, I am blessed to be able to serve people with our food pantry, to facilitate a Eucharistic Ministry team who take communion to those who are not able to come to church, and to facilitate various volunteer groups in our church.

In our Eucharistic ministry we have 6 ministers that take communion to people who cannot come to church. This is a valuable ministry that reflects our mission that we are a "Church without Walls".

I have the privilege to be part of the core team for the Ecumenical Inclusive Ministry Church held at Lake Street Methodist Church in Eau Claire. IM church has a worship experience for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. As part of the core team my mission is to recruit churches to lead an IM Church worship service during the year. Immanuel led IM church in September. Thank you to the volunteers that served!

I also am part of the Dementia Friendly Faith based team through the Aging Disability Resource Center. The mission of the team is to promote and train churches in becoming Dementia Friendly places of worship.

Janet Carlson, Ministry Care Coordinator

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle met for their last Bible Study on 12/19/18, disbanding Immanuel's W/ELCA affiliation with the exception of the Thank Offering. After many discussions and prayers over the years and dwindling attendance over the past months it was decided to be the best plan of action.

All women of the church were members of the W/ELCA. Back in the LCW days, two Circles, Dorcas and Martha were active, one met in the afternoon and one in the evening. In the late 1960's some women with young children formed a morning Circle, the Ruth Circle. Ruth Circle has been active within W/ELCA, our own congregation, and our community in many ways despite a usually small number of members. This support included donations and support of the Chipewewa Valley Free Clinic, Northwest Synod Resource Center, Luther Park, Immanuel Youth, the Lutheran Cemetery Fund, Community Table, Sojourner's House, Beacon House, and Jail Ministry, to name a few.

Sincere thanks to the women who have served as officers currently or in the past, the women who have attended Bible Study at any time, and all within our congregation who have supported the work of Ruth Circle!



Create-A-World classes have had a great first half of the year. Starting in February we will be hosting a practicum student from CVTC for the rest of the year. This student will shadow both classes and eventually lead an activity. The preschool board agreed to offer only morning classes next year as the afternoon class did not fill this year. Registration for the 2019-2020 school year will begin Monday, February 4th. Thank you for your prayers and support!

Report of the Immanuel Lutheran Church Trust - 2018

The stated mission of the Trust Fund is “to serve in partnership with Immanuel Lutheran Church to be a living witness to God’s love and concern for the world. This will be evident in the socially responsible investment and distribution of the Trust’s assets and income for such purposes.”

The bylaws of the Trust stipulate that up to 5% of the fund assets, as determined by the previous year total market value as of September 30, may be distributed (so in 2019 the Trust can distribute up to 5% of the market value of the Trust on September 30, 2018).

The Trust Fund prioritizes the exploration of innovative ideas and projects that will build on or expand Immanuel’s mission in our congregation, our community and our world.

Grant disbursements in 2018 were made for the following purposes:

- To support Immanuel’s youth , making it possible for them to attend the National Youth Gathering.
- To support our friends in Malawi by providing funds for a pastor to attend a permaculture training program.
- To fund the printing of a children’s book written by Immanuel member, Diane Kaufmann. The books shows how children’s lives in Malawi are the same or different from the lives of children in the United States.
- To provide start-up funds for the Inclusive Ministry (IM) Church of Eau Claire. IM Church is a coalition of several faith communities working together to provide a monthly message of God’s love and a meal for people with cognitive and other disabilities.
- To support Joshua’s Camp, a camp for families who have a child being treated for cancer.
- To support Lidice Montoya, an immigrant from El Salvador, in her education as she seeks a Masters Degree in leadership and innovation at Luther Seminary.
- To support Positive Avenues, a Lutheran Social Services organization in Eau Claire that provides a safe day-time environment for persons dealing with mental health and substance abuse issues as well as those experiencing episodes of homelessness.
- To support the Stand in the Light Memory Choir, a community choir for those living with dementia.

Market value at September 30, 2017: \$1,031,029.94

Market value at September 30, 2018: \$1,051,143.76

Current Board of Trustees: Pastor Brieske, Marcia Bowman, Curt Carlson, Zan Degan, Gay Fehr, and Sheldon Satter

Administrator: Dee Schlieve

ZIP (Zomba Immanuel Partners)

Our goal this year, as in the past two years, has been to secure funds to assist travelers to visit Zomba Parish in 2019. With monies from the soup supper, Chili Cook Off, Thrift Sale (which we co-sponsored with the youth), Day Lily Dig, and matching funds from the Foundation, ZIP will be able to assist financially the eight travelers to Zomba. Those traveling are Pastor Jamie Brieske, Tammie Delveaux, Holli Jacobson, Katie LoRusso, Frankie LoRusso, Mindy Rosenberger, Luke Rosenberger, and Allison Haus.

ZIP would like to thank all who have provided the travelers with monetary gifts and supported the Chili Cook Off, Thrift Sale and Day Lily Dig. Your help has been most appreciated!

In addition to fundraising efforts, ZIP provided funds to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi for training Pastors in Permaculture, a sustainable agricultural practice being introduced in Malawi. Also, ZIP provided and served a meal for WoW.

Jan Lothe, ZIP Coordinator

Immanuel Annual Meeting Minutes Covering Year 2017

February 4, 2018

Pastor Jamie Brieske opened the annual meeting with the litany that was on the back of the annual report. Life of Faith team member, Pastor Greg Kaufmann helped write this litany.

Pastor Jamie gave an overview of the Pastor's report. Our LSS partnership is new and is going well. There have been more service projects with the youth. They and the quilters have teamed up to make blankets and quilts. The Pastor has completed one year of Clergy coaching, which has been a highlight of her year.

The trip she and Alyssa took to Houston helped them understand what the ELCA youth gathering was. She is hoping that the Youth Gathering gives the youth the momentum to start their call to serve. The youth want to bring the congregation along in the journey, not just ask for financial support.

Pastor Jamie is looking forward to other opportunities to grow as the Church without walls

A motion to approve the Pastor's report was made by Bob Lothal, seconded by Marc Likkel. Motion carried.

The congregation then reviewed the minutes of last year's annual meeting. It was noted that Dona Peterson and Marc Likkel's names were misspelled. Greg Kaufmann made a motion to approve the minutes with the corrections. Larry Blanshan seconded. Motion carried

Council Nominations

The nominating committee made the motion to nominate: Larry Blanshan, Peggy Blomenberg, Lang Jacobson and Keith Martin for positions on the council.

Council President Peggy Blomenberg informed the congregation that they will be electing three council members, and the council will be appointing one person to fill out the last year of Steve Isaacson's term. She also mentioned that Immanuel has two youth members this year Sabrina Hagstrom and Sara Hegde. There were no motions from the floor.

Leon moved to close the nominations. Larry Blanshan seconded. Motion carried. Andrea Schaffer and Sue Koch offered to count ballots. Peggy recognized current and past council members for their time served on the council.

The next item for discussion was to review and approve the committee reports, which were located in the February issue of the Image. Ray Koch made a motion to approve the reports. Greg Kaufmann seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Casper Haas went over details of the Consolidated Fund Activity Report. He indicated that there is still money in the pipe organ fund. Mission Investment fund will be closed out and monies placed in the capital improvement fund. He explained that WoW has been added to the budget.

Jerry Hanson made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Greg Kaufmann seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2018 Budget

Immanuel's council has made a motion for the congregation approve the budget for 2018.

The budget is increasing to \$259,000. It is an increase of \$10,000 over last year. Total expenses last year were \$253,991. The Increases were due to maintenance items of the building. Building maintenance expense was increased by \$1500 as was the Office Expense account. There are four new budget lines for Office equipment maintenance, AV/IT maintenance, Staff Retirement contribution account 401 for staff. WoW has a budget now instead of running its expenses through special funds. All four of the accounts have a \$1000 balance.

Leon asked about the number of members at Immanuel. In the Narthex it is noted there are 530 members, are these confirmed members or total? Janet Carlson answered that this information is from when the website was worked on a

few years ago.

Immanuel had 472 total members last year. There were 14 baptized, 2 affirmation of faith, 14 people transferred to Immanuel, one transferred out. Nine died. Currently there are 483 members' total and 170 giving units.

For 2017 Immanuel did not quite meet its budget. There was a \$7000 loss for the year. In September we had a \$30,000 loss. Important thing is we increased giving to overcome the majority of the loss. Greg Kaufmann seconded council's motion to approve the budget. Motion carried.

Organ Repair Update

David Schaffer updated the congregation on the organ. It's been two years since it started. It's been suggested that it will be finished by Easter. Will need volunteers with the woodworking for what will encase the pipes.

Audio Visual upgrade

Don Schlieve gave an update on the Audio Visual upgrade. This project started out with trying to get more people to enjoy the service, by providing a way for the Nursery to see the worship service. Then FCC changed the bandwidth for our wireless system. That interfered with the wireless system we were trying to use in the nursery and chancel area. The wireless system was talking with taxis and cellphones. This forced Immanuel to buy the present wireless system. Immanuel is also purchasing a new soundboard which needed to be replaced. The current soundboard was borrowed.

The proposal the team has adds a number of upgrades. It will allow Immanuel to project into different rooms, we will be able to see the children's sermon, and allow projection of the Christmas program and baptisms. The council asked if we can do it in stages. The problem being is that the most expensive part is what we need in order to get started. We aren't able to project some video.

Keith Martin, speaking for the council, indicated that there doesn't seem to be much disagreement whether this needs to be done. Primary mission is to spread the gospel. To do this effectively it requires tech support. The biggest controversy is how to pay for it. The number is pretty close to \$60,000. The council deliberated doing this in stages, but it is not a good technological decision. The disagreement the council is having is how to pay for it.

Peggy told the congregation that Immanuel could borrow money and do the project. This still means adding at least \$10,000 to the budget. This seemed excessive to the council since we added to the budget this year.

Al Ludwig mentioned that if we go ahead, the weekly increase would be 60 cents per member. If every Sunday every person did that for eight years, we would pay for it. This means over and above what we normally give. If we would have a fundraiser, we would want people to give over and above what they give for our regular mission.

Peggy explained to the congregation that the council does not have plan because the council has not voted to do this yet. The council needs to hear from the congregation first. This is not a council decision. Any expense over \$2000 or more above the budget need to be approved by the congregation.

Results of election were then announced. The Council members elected are: Keith Martin, Peggy Blumenberg, and Lang Jacobson. Larry Blanshan was asked to serve the last year of Steve Isaacson's term.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by
Vicki Fankhauser
Council Secretary