



The Image

September 2021



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What Might God Be Up To?



Do you ever feel like God brings lessons to you repeatedly? Perhaps the first time you learned the lesson you really didn't have the life experience needed to really absorb it. Perhaps you were a slow learner and God needed to teach you again! Or perhaps it may simply be a lifelong lesson that you need to continually relearn and reapply. Trusting God is one of those lessons that we need to continually learn.

This fall we will remember the lessons that God's people learned as they were in the wilderness. God's created people were given the gift of manna, the leadership of Moses and Aaron, the prophetic voice of Miriam, and eventually the law to help them learn to trust

God and be God's people together. We too as God's people of Immanuel need to rely on God as we forge our way into this new frontier of life and ministry together.

This year I have been enrolled in a missional leadership cohort. It is strengthening my ability to lead in times of change and uncertainty. It is also helping me go deeper into my spiritual practices to discern what God might be up to in my life and in the life of the church.

Pastor Erin Nelson, one of our Synod Ministers, urged me to participate in this great training which was covered by a generous grant from a foundation. As we began the course we did a deep dive into our own congregations, listing the ministries, characteristics, and challenges that our particular church was facing. It felt very familiar, and yet new. It turns out much of the leadership training is based on the Missional Leadership material from Luther Seminary. Once upon a time I dreamed of adding a Missional emphasis to my Masters of Divinity Degree during Seminary. Yet, between commuting and having two babies, I was not able to finish this area of study. And so.... Voila! Spirit brings this lesson right back into my life, right when I need it most.

Missional discernment centers on asking questions and imagining God's desired future. One of the most important questions is: *What might God be up to?* We can ask this question in many different ways in our personal lives and in the lives of our church community.

What is God doing in my life? What is the Spirit trying to teach me?

What gifts has God given our congregation? How are we called to bless our community?

As we enter into this uncertain time of living with COVID19, we continually rely on God's Spirit to lead and guide us to be the people we are called to be. We imagine a way that we can support one another fully, with much love and grace. We imagine a way to come together as safely as possible to provide the spiritual support, encouragement, and faith formation that we need. What might God be up to as we find strength in our faith and walk into this future together?

God's love and blessings to you and your families!
Pastor Jamie Brieske



H3 is a time for adults of all ages to meet to discuss a book, participate in a Bible study, pray for one another and just enjoy each other's company. There are two meeting options: Monday evenings from 6:30 - 8:00 PM or Tuesday mornings from 9:30 - 11:00 AM. Fall sessions begin on September 13/14. We will be watching two video series' focused on how we got the New Testament and will also be taking a deep dive into the book of Romans. We will meet in person at Immanuel and will also provide a Zoom option for those who prefer to participate virtually. We welcome new members - come, check it out!

An update from Pastor Jamie:

I am recovering well after a needed medical procedure and leave. I will return to Sunday worship on September 12.

Thank you for all the prayers and support!



Immanuel's food pantry is open on Mondays from 4 - 6 PM. Two people are needed each week to greet the guests who rely on our pantry for food. All it takes is a kind heart and a friendly smile! [Sign up here](#) or contact the church office to help.

We are in need of worship assistants! If you are interested in being an AV volunteer, greeter, usher or reader, please contact Dee in the church office. There are openings for all spots! Training happily provided, but there is no experience necessary!



Worship Assistants

Youth and Family Ministry



Join us on September 12 for our annual kickoff to the learning year! We will have a Blessing of the Backpacks for all teachers & learners who are headed back to school, so bring your backpack along. Journey of Faith learners will also have a chance to find their classroom & meet their teacher. Our regular Journey of Faith classes will begin following worship the next week. We are planning to offer in- person learning on Sunday mornings, and do ask that all participants wear masks. In addition, we are requiring all

of our leaders to be vaccinated. We are hopeful that COVID numbers will go down in our area, and we will adapt these policies as we are able!



During the worship service on Sunday, September 19, we will officially welcome 3 years old's into Journey of Faith with an ABC Milestone blessing.



SHYN (Senior High Youth Night) is resuming in person on September 15! SHYN will meet weekly following WoW worship throughout the school year from about 6:30-7:30 PM in the Youth Room. We will spend this time together each Wednesday sharing highs & lows, enjoying fellowship together, planning events/retreats, and having Bible study.

Mark your calendar for Godstock 2021: November 12-14 at the Metropolis Hotel. The Synod Youth Board is planning for an in-person event, and it's going to be groovy!

Although it feels like we just returned from the Porcupine Mountains, it's time to start planning for next summer! Next summer we are planning to attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. Watch your email to find out more!



Attention 6th – 8th graders! Confirmation is starting! Watch your email for details on orientation and sign-up.

Our regular WoW schedule will begin on September 15 - 6 pm Worship, 6:30 pm Learning & SHYN.

Camp Create is excited to begin our sixth year! This two-year-old day camp ministry will begin after Labor Day and will have classes Monday - Thursday mornings. Our classes are nearly full – we do have limited spaces still available if you know of someone who is interested. Camp Create is a great way for two year old's to begin a school-like setting, in a warm, engaging, Christian atmosphere. Our motto is "Play, Learn & Grow in God's Love," and we spend each day doing just that! Talk to Alyssa if you have questions or would like to learn more.



We are looking forward to welcoming students back to Create-A-World Preschool on September 7th! Jennifer Larson and Katy LoRusso will be back as teachers, and we are excited to welcome a new teacher, Melissa Corlett.



I'm very excited to let you know that church choir is back! It may look a little different, but we will gather to rehearse and prepare anthems and sing praise to God!

Our first rehearsal is Wednesday, September 8, at 7:30 PM. New members are always welcome!

We are also celebrating a new gift to our music ministry at

Immanuel, a set of handbells! We have been gifted through donors and the Immanuel Trust Fund a full set of bells. Music has been secured, too, so we're ready to go. Rehearsals will start on Wednesday, September 15, and will be from 7 - 8 PM. If you can only make it to rehearsal for part of the time, that's ok! Come when you can, leave when you need to. Open to all ages!



Handbell Choir

In order to keep choir and congregation members safe, the Council has put a few mitigation factors in place. As the health of our community improves, these requirements will ease over time.

- Church choir and bell choir members must be vaccinated against COVID-19 to participate.
- All members of both ensembles will be required wear masks.
- While rehearsing and performing, ensemble members will be spaced six feet apart.

Tammie Delveaux Rubenzer

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday



Sept. 19
2021

*Together in Jesus Christ
we are freed by grace to
live faithfully, witness
boldly and serve
joyfully.*

**Sunday, September
19, 2021**

GWOH is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. We do acts of service to deepen our experience with our community and to play a critical part in addressing community needs.

Our church — and our world — continue to live through the COVID-19 pandemic. But the good news is that we are beginning to experience a slow return to the daily routines and gatherings as more people become vaccinated. We look forward to gathering with family and friends once again to share God's love in person.

Amid this ongoing situation we continue to be **church together**. Throughout the ELCA we are witnessing the love and concern God's people have for one another. During this time, our congregations continue to support ministries that assist vulnerable people in their communities. These acts of service allow us to explore one of our most basic Lutheran convictions: ***All of life in Jesus Christ — every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life — flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.***

There are many ways you can participate:

- Red Cross blood drive at St. John's Lutheran Church - Friday, September 17
- Neighbor to Neighbor thrift sale drop-off at Grace Lutheran Church - Saturday, September 18.
- Airport bike trail cleanup
- Beaver Creek trail & garden cleanup
- Brat stand at St. John's Lutheran Church to benefit Community Table
- Various tasks at the LGBTQ Center

[Signup online here](#) or contact the church office.

LIRS Responds to the Crisis in Afghanistan

For over 80 years, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) has been a champion for refugees and migrants from around the globe. LIRS is actively working to aid in the evacuation of our Afghan allies to a place of safety. Once they are safely here, LIRS will assist in what they expect to be a severe backlog in the processing of Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs.). For ways you can help, please visit the LIRS website:

<https://www.lirs.org/help-our-afghan-allies/>

Prayers for Afghanistan

(from the ELCA website, www.elca.org)

Almighty and merciful God,
whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own,
look with mercy on the Afghan people who are fleeing from danger,
persecution, violence, and seeking the safety of home.

Bless and protect those who work to bring them relief;
inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts;
and guide the leaders of this nation and nations of the world toward
that day when all will rejoice in your kingdom of justice and of peace.



The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Lay School of Ministry

Equipping Lay Leaders for Ministry

The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin has held a Lay School of Ministry since 1992. The two-year course offers an in-depth study of theology and scriptures to lay persons. The curriculum involves lectures on Biblical Studies, Theology/Church History, Worship and Spiritual Formation. The Lay School meets monthly on a Friday evening and Saturday morning, usually at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Chippewa Falls. However, due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding COVID-19 and the Delta variant, classes will be held virtually via Zoom. Tuition is \$475 per year, but the Immanuel Trust Fund supports this education for congregants and will pay the tuition for both years!

Many Immanuel members have been through Lay School; if you would like more information, contact the church office for a list of those people. You can also get more information along with a registration form on the Lay School website, www.layschoolofministry.org.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Minutes for July 20, 2021

Council Members: Emilie Anderson, Karen Betzig-Lundberg, Jennifer Dean, Olympia Evergreen, Becky Ivey, Lang Jacobson, Sandra LaValley, Bill Schwengel, Bob Wilcox.

Council Members Absent: Pastor Jamie Brieske and Becky Carter

Gathering

Dwelling in the Word, Luke 10:1-12

Celebration of Current Ministries

Thank You Notes: Council would like to thank Mary Bischel and Kim for the extensive work in painting Luther Hall. Council would also like to thank Alyssa and Andy Engedal for taking the youth group to the Porcupine Mountains for this summer's youth trip.

Future Ministry Directions

Music Ministry Proposal - A proposal is in the shared drive which addresses a proposed procedure of incorporating music for worship, choir and handbells, for the upcoming services beginning in September.

Discussion: How does this fit with current recommendations from county health? Singing is a higher risk activity. There are few absolutes and varying risks for activities although masking and vaccinations being two effective measures.

Outdoor activity would be preferred, not that it is necessarily possible. How safe is it being unmasked, standing together vs masked and separate when practicing? The length of time standing together is another consideration - practice will take longer vs one song 3 -5 minutes of performance. Perhaps staying masked at a minimum. We may need expertise for guidance on these issues. Science does say that mode of transmission is reported more contagious and easily spread by aerosol method - reaches farther and the opportunity for reaching more. There is an importance placed on layers of mitigation - 6 ft apart while being masked is another layer of mitigation will help. Confusion over the third bullet may need explanation - "this aligns with the church leadership policy". Questions to help clarify regarding the bell choir - How close is ok for the bell choir to be standing? Distancing and masking is important for that choir as well. Regarding "performing in person one Sunday per month" - this would require ongoing evaluation based on how things are going. A council member will reach out to Tammie to clarify some questions around the bell choir.

In summary - we have a few questions - would it be possible to stay masked while singing and recording and stay distanced while doing that to improve mitigation? Has someone asked the choir members their feelings on the proposal? Can we get information from a source with the required details to make these decisions? Is the information being planned and disseminated as accurate as we could make it? Can Council and Tammy be advised on that to make sure the information is accurate? Can we consider additional sources of information to see what is happening with recommendations for singing/performing groups in our community?

Caring Ministry - This is an important ministry, but we do not have new information or a change at this time.

Ministry Support

Property Report - Bill submitted his reports to the shared folders. Refrigerator/Freezer Highlights: There is a great deal of information regarding the importance of the best refrigeration systems for the congregation and food pantry use. One concern regarding the commercial refrigerators is the noise they generally create. (\$2300 in food pantry fund for refrigerator; \$1049 from maintenance budget ... The finance committee thought this would be ok to use moving forward knowing we may possibly go over the budget by year end if something unexpected happens.) Discussion on the magnetic seal - convenience or lack of due to the time lapse to reopen the unit as the seal needs a little time to reset. Council accepts the recommendations from the property committee in purchasing a refrigerator and freezer. Tree Removal Highlights: From the estimates collected, a tree service has been identified for removing the ash trees on the property. A motion to approve the property report was made by Emilie, seconded by Jennifer, and passed unanimously.

Finance Report - The reports are in the shared drive and things seem to be going along well. A motion to approve was made by Karen, seconded Bob, and unanimously approved.

Aug 29th Worship - volunteers needed: Volunteers have been found.

COVID discussion - Emilie: Who are the "we" who asked for the masks to be reinstated? Who will the "we" be moving forward, especially with the Delta variant present and issues that may come up with that?

By whom and how are decisions being made in the absence of the COVID team and structured guidance?

Questions to consider:

1. Serving as Immanuel's governance body charged with leadership, what is Council's responsibility for ongoing oversight of COVID decisions and practices?
2. In the absence of a COVID team, what resource(s) should guide consistent, coordinated monitoring and decision oversight?

3. To what extent is Council willing to seek and follow guidance from infectious disease experts, similar to its established practice for other decisions requiring specialized knowledge and experience?
4. Who is currently responsible for decisions and relaying information?
5. Are there other options to #4 that Council should consider?
6. Has the congregation been informed that the COVID team is not functional? If not, should it be notified?
7. Should the congregation be updated with projected plans about Council's ongoing role related to safety planning?
8. What other questions does the Council wish to address?

These are complicated issues with no easy answers. There is complexity to questions that arise, such as the music proposal. We owe our very best as a council to the congregation in this important subject as we do other important subjects. Are you willing to share your thoughts on the individual questions and come to some sort of agreement and where we as a council should be led in the future.

Discussion:

Not all council members were aware of the COVID team's letter to disband until having read it in the shared folder or learning of it tonight. What are we going to do now that the team has disbanded and the Delta surge and other recommendations are coming out? How do we intake recommendations and then make decisions to keep the congregation safe but moving forward?

An advisory group to give information is perhaps needed again.

Council cannot move as fast without an advisory group to give guidance.

We have been happy with things getting back to some normalcy. There is a need for some individuals to help us along. This was a great resource, especially from Kitty, and now with the variant coming on we probably need assistance again from the team. Pastor Jamie and all others are doing a great job,

Motions made by Emilie:

I move that the council inform Immanuel's congregation as soon as possible that the covid team's advisory function ended June 15, 2021. The motion is seconded by Bill and unanimously approved.

*The announcement will be included in an eblast.

I move that by Aug 31st council defines and declares to the congregation a plan or intention for ongoing covid safety management practices and decision-making processes at Immanuel. The motion is seconded by Karen.

Discussion - Many questions and thoughts shared surrounded the following ideas: A timeline of Aug. 31st is tight and could require a special session for Council. Is there benefit to revisiting existing plans and documentation to support a template to move forward with any necessary revisions? What will the decision-making process look like moving forward and until a plan is made; will a collective group or appointed people be making decisions? Karen put together a sequential compilation of materials generated by COVID team all in one package. Kitty, Emilie and Karen looked at it and felt it provides a helpful insight to look at in one complete package.

Could the previous team be asked once again to provide to Council the excellent guidance they gave? Not having a formal committee does not mean we cannot ask experts, within our congregation, local health departments and others, for guidelines and recommendations. Being able to list resources from a qualified public health resource to support decision making and policy/protocols is important as metrics change and gathering types differ.

A vote on the motion resulted in two votes to abstain, three votes aye, and four votes nay.

Council will return to these questions on the next agenda and will receive them via email directly, allowing everyone time to consider the questions brought forward tonight.

In closing the discussion: Four weeks from now when we next meet, we'll know more about the Delta variant and how that is going. Things will ramp up in a certain way and we have to figure it out. Discussion that builds on an action plan is imperative and this topic will be a priority item on the September agenda and that we make it a goal to come out with some specific plans.

Closing Prayer

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Becky I, seconded Olympia, and approved unanimously.

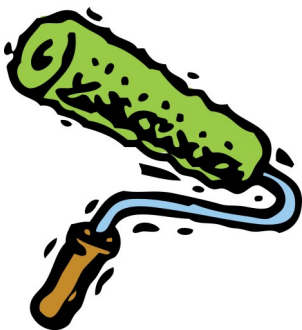
SEPTEMBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

01 Melody Dragseth
02 Lois Helland
02 Bill Schwengel
03 Linda Hedding
03 Thomas Fey
04 Steve Johnson
04 Jodi Buchholz
04 Madeline LoRusso
05 Sue Waits
05 Deb Balts
06 Sue Luthy
08 Kaleb Engedal
09 Robert Schaffer
10 JonPaul Dragseth
10 Grant Benware
11 Ed August
11 Scott Magnuson
11 Linda LaFave
11 Heather Hedges
12 Barb Lundeen
12 Lauren Likkel

15 Doug Olson
16 Casper Haas
17 Robin Gullicksrud
17 Chris Redetzke
18 Hattie Hungerholt
19 Levi Felling
19 Graham Kuhn
20 Gary Hedding
20 Kira Novakosfski
20 Andrew Carlson
21 Amy Schlieve
22 Griffin Fey
27 Betty Gertner
27 Marc Likkel
27 Todd Fox
28 Brian Bischel
29 Marilyn Pospishil
30 Trapper Carlson

03 Darrell & Joy Becker
04 Levi Felling & Sarah Aiken-Felling
08 Keith & Alison Martin
15 Erv & Linda LaFave
16 Ray & Sue Koch
17 Andy & Alyssa Engedal
18 Scott & Gwen Magnuson
19 Gary & Joan Pospishil
21 Brent & Carol Sue Carlson
23 Matt & Kelsey Coyle
26 Faly & Lalao Rakotomahenina



The painting and repair work to the walls and ceiling in the sanctuary was completed earlier this year. Now, thanks to Kim Sturz and Mary Bischel, the narthex and Luther Hall have also been painted. It looks amazing! Thank you, Kim and Mary!

September 2021

If you shop on Amazon, log into Amazon Smile. We receive \$ from your purchases. <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-0990139>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 9 AM Worship	30 4-6 PM Food Pantry open	31	1	2	3	4
5 9 AM Worship	6 Office closed for Labor Day Food Pantry Closed	7 Create-a-World classes begin	8 Camp Create classes begin 7:30-9:00 PM - Choir Rehearsal	9	10	11
12 Rally Sunday! 9 AM Worship with Backpack Milestone Blessing	13 4-6 PM Food Pantry open 6:30 PM H3 meets	14 9:30 AM H3 meets	15 10 AM Sr Bible Study 6:00 PM WoW Worship 6:30-7:30 PM Learning 7:00-8:00 PM - Handbell choir rehearsal 8:00-9:00 PM - Vocal choir rehearsal	16	17	18
19 9 AM Worship with ABC Milestone Blessing God's Work. Our Hands. event	20 4-6 PM Food Pantry open 6:30 PM H3 meets	21 9:30 AM H3 meets 7 PM - Council meeting	22 10 AM Sr Bible Study 6:00 PM WoW Worship 6:30-7:30 PM Learning 7:00-8:00 PM - Handbell choir rehearsal 8:00-9:00 PM - Vocal choir rehearsal	23	24	25
26 9 AM Worship with New Member Blessing	27 4-6 PM Food Pantry open 6:30 PM H3 meets	28 9:30 AM H3 meets	29 10 AM Sr Bible Study 6:00 PM WoW Worship 6:30-7:30 PM Learning 7:00-8:00 PM - Handbell choir rehearsal 8:00-9:00 PM - Vocal choir rehearsal	30	1	2

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Home of Create-A-World Preschool and Camp Create

Immanuel Lutheran Church is a congregation of all ages and backgrounds gathered to worship God, walk with one another in our faith journeys, and reach out to the community with compassion. We welcome people new to our faith community and invite them to share our ministry.

Our roots run deep in the community, yet we seek to respond to our constantly changing culture. From our worship services to our preschool, we are dedicated to spreading God's word and living lives to reflect God's love for the world.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
3214 Golf Road
Eau Claire, WI 54701
Address service required

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Dated Material—useless if delayed



*A congregation of the
Northwest Synod of the ELCA of Wisconsin*