



September 2020 Newsletter

A Word from Interim Pastor Kim



RALLYING

My own church upbringing didn't have any kind of "Rally Day" tradition. I'm starting to think it's because we must have had Sunday School even over the summer just like you did this year! We did get promoted to the next class in Sunday School, and perhaps there a picnic. But I don't recall any kind of celebration that marked the change of a whole-church rhythm.

The word *rally*, I discovered, has many meanings. Here are some of the uses as a verb:

- "to bring into order again; gather or organize or inspire anew"
- "to draw or call together for a common action or effort"
- "to concentrate or revive, such as rallying one's strength or spirits"

And as a noun:

- "a renewal, or recovery of strength and activity"

At church, Rally Day (or month, why not?) celebrates the gift of renewal, that feeling of "new year's eve" we get in the crisper air, and a back-to-school, in-a-new-grade feeling we never really get over despite our age or even the ravages of covid. It's a recovering of our inner strength and activity. Rally Month gathers us to inspire one another for new and renewed opportunities of life together: Worshiping God. Welcoming Everyone. Building Community. Working for Social Justice.

This rallying is a drawing or coming together after catching our breaths, recovering a bit after the shock of dispersing last spring, for the common action of attending to your call process for a settled pastor, for our coming together for God's Work, Our Hands. For the beautiful ways you have been showing up for one another and for God's presence through these months. And, for what is possible and fresh for your mission and ministry as we apply our imaginations even in the continued disruption of our expectations and routines, and what is still unknown.

Rallying is perhaps a condition of life these days as you strive to know and share God's love. We need to have the strongest basis possible, grounded in the Word, and plenty of encouragement. In these days when anxiety and uncertainties are heightened, when we don't have the regular interactions that keep us in balance, we are rallied for our community life by familiar passages as:

- "Let love be genuine. Love one another with mutual affection. Outdo one another in showing honor."
- "Do not lag in zeal. Be ardent in Spirit. Serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope!"
- "Love your neighbor as yourself"
- "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone."
- "We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live

to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.

- "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus."

And...

"If two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, is here, among us. Christ's love draws us together. In these covid days, as in all challenges, we need one another. We rally: in faith, in hope, and in love.

*Interim Pastor Kim Beckmann
pastor@immanuelevanston.org*

September Sunday Scripture Readings



September 6

Ezekiel 33:7-11
Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

September 20

Jonah 3:10-4:11
Psalm 145:1-8
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

September 13

Genesis 50:15-21
Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

September 27

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
Psalm 25:1-9
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

Daily lectionary readings can be found at www.dailylectio.net

Worship Matters

A Month of Blessing and Dedication to Service

We praise God in the blessing of song. Our choir rallies voices, beginning mid September. We will be adding a "hymn of praise" during our prelude time! Join us early to sing your heart out!

God blesses us with life and we live as a blessing to others. As just one way to return thanks for God's gifts and generously impact Immanuel's mission and ministry..... click on the "I'd like to make my offering" offering plate in the Sunday Constant Contact announcement. Throughout the month we also dedicate ourselves in the work of our hands.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 – God Bless Our Lives and Labor. Even as we have

just blessed the beginning of the academic year, we now offer up our work in the world for blessing this Labor Day weekend, you are invited to bring a token, or some portable object, representing your vocation or calling in the home, community, or world.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 – God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday. We bless hands joined across the congregations of the ELCA. Our own project is still under construction, but we will join other congregations in the ELCA in celebrating this day, and hear more at coffee hour about the way we will participate at a later date. Our choir blesses us with an offertory.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20 – Blessing and Dedication of the Quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Our quilters and knitters have altered their “supply chain”, taken their work together to zoom, and on this Sunday dedicate these quilts on God’s altar before they are taken to the truck with the work of other hands as these multi-use signs of God’s love and our care begin their journey to be scattered throughout the world to places of need.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 – God Blesses us with Angels Among Us. We celebrate the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels (September 29). If you have an angel picture or figurine or other particular touchstone of ways you are blessed by a reminder of a holy messenger or protector sent by God, you may want to have that with you this Sunday as you create your zoom holy space for the day.



Anti-Racism Initiative

Many of you remember the worship service held in commemoration of the Emanuel 9 on June 17th this year. Beyond this commemoration of the nine people shot and killed during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, SC, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has also launched an ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge. (Click on the icon above.)

The pledge states, in part, “As church we are called to confess the sin of racism, condemn the ideology of white supremacy, and strive for racial justice and peace. Beyond statements and prayers, we are called to also act and respond to injustices.” At its August 23, 2020 meeting, Immanuel’s church council approved a motion that Immanuel:

1. Join other ELCA congregations in signing the ELCA Anti-Racism pledge as Immanuel Lutheran Church of Evanston,
2. hold ourselves accountable within the life of our congregation to continue this work of becoming anti-racist,
3. encourage individuals to sign the ELCA Anti-Racism pledge, and
4. continue to provide opportunities for support, growth and accountability for our members in becoming anti-racist individuals in an anti-racist church.

Further, in order to facilitate Immanuel’s implementation of the ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge, council approved the formation of a task force. The new task force will be similar to the earlier Active Welcome task force. Anyone interested in being a task force member should contact Charly Yarnoff or Susan Ross.

Those who sign the pledge as individuals are invited to commit to one or more action, such as study, prayer, learning and advocacy. Other actions include joining community

groups working for racial justice and building or deepening relationships with Historic Black Churches.

Already, a group of approximately 20 individuals from Immanuel met weekly in July to discuss the pledge, to learn more about the origins of racism and what it means to be an anti-racist. We've prayed. Several of us have begun to join community groups working for racial justice. Others are working to strengthen our relationships with local Historic Black Churches. We have plans to further our learning by discussing several books.

The group will continue to meet on a monthly basis (please check the website for dates), so that we can continue to support and encourage each other in response to the ELCA Anti-Racism Pledge. We encourage everyone to sign the pledge and participate in Immanuel's Anti-Racism activities!

Susan Ross

Celebration of Ebenezer AME's 138th Anniversary

As part of Immanuel's intention to begin building relationships with historic African Descent congregations in our community, church council approved a donation of \$138 from the Evangelism budget in order to participate as Immanuel Lutheran in the Ebenezer AME 5k virtual run/walk celebrating their 138th anniversary and partnership with Family Promise Chicago North Shore. Family Promise Chicago North Shore is dedicated to helping families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless get back on their feet and provide a stable lifestyle for their children. Ebenezer AME is located here in Evanston on Emerson Street, just east of Ridge Avenue.

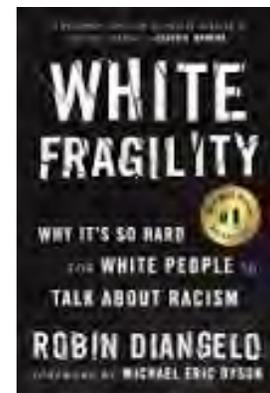
- *Note: As we go to press with this newsletter, we have all now become aware that Ebenezer AME has suffered a tragedy. We join them in their calls for prayers for healing of body and spirit for Jacob Blake, a son of the congregation whose grandfather served as pastor and civil rights leader at Ebenezer, as well as his children and his family. Evanston Mayor Steve Haggerty has announced that there will be an outdoor Service of Lament at Ebenezer AME on Sunday, August 30th. The community is invited. The service will be held at 2 pm. Masks and social distancing will be required.*

Susan Ross

White Fragility Book Discussions - Coming Soon

On Wednesday evenings during July, there were group discussions via Zoom about white racial awareness and the church hierarchy's commitment to a deeper understanding of personal, cultural, and institutional racism. The goal of this deeper understanding is to become anti-racist individuals in an anti-racist church.

We learned that one book and author have been at the center of many far-ranging discussions about white privilege. As an outgrowth of the Zoom gatherings, the Social Ministry Committee invites you to a series of three discussions based on this book.



Best-selling *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism* by Robin DiAngelo was published in paperback in 2018. It is also available as a downloadable e-book, downloadable e-audio book, audio book on CD, and for Kindle. Sources include Amazon, downtown Evanston's Bookends and Beginnings, public libraries (though in limited supply).

We will discuss *White Fragility* in three 1-hour sessions this fall, each time focusing on

some 50 pages of text. The Zoom sessions will take place from 7:00 to 8:00 pm on Tuesday evenings.

The schedule is as follows:

- September 15: Introduction–Chapter 3, pp. 1-50
- October 13: Chapters 4–7, pp. 51-106
- November 10: Chapters 8–12, pp. 107-154

Diane Keely has volunteered to lead the discussions.

There will also be links to several videos in which you can see and hear the author talk about her life, how she grew to understand the concepts of white privilege and institutional racism, and how she became committed to bringing this awareness to a largely white audience. You can watch the videos whenever you like. Getting to know the author's journey helps you the reader begin your own journey.

There will be an email reminder before each discussion. Charly Yarnoff will manage the Zoom links for the meetings. If you have questions, you can reach Diane at dianekeely@hotmail.com or 847.491.9144. We hope you'll join members of our congregation and the larger church in this justice and peace initiative.

Diane Keely

September Birthdays

Nina Cudecki 9/1
Gloria Meldman 9/4
Allison Lamberg 9/7
Melisa Larson 9/7
Lawrence Lee 9/12
Elaine Nelson 9/14
Marlene Chatain 9/19
Brian Lamberg 9/28

Immanuel Lutheran of Evanston



Hunger Grants 2019 - 2020

Click to read about the recipients and the inspiring work they do!

Thank You from....

Click to read [letters](#) from some of our recipients.

Sunday School



We're very happy that Sunday School at Immanuel has continued this spring and summer, unstopped by the coronavirus. It's a little different than meeting in person, but it's

amazing how much we can do together over Zoom. We read the Bible together, watch videos about the lesson, listen to music, and even make crafts.

What are we learning about? Creation, Isaiah (Chapter 7), Daniel, the Good Samaritan, Pentecost, the early church and much more!

Currently, we've got two teachers and three students. Please contact us if you know any youth who would like to participate. Also please let us know if you're interested in serving as a substitute teacher or helping in other ways. Class meets approximately every other Sunday at 9:30 am and will continue this fall.

Susan Ross and Tyler Heyl

Midweek Adult Spiritual Growth Discussions Continue

Our Wednesday evening gatherings will continue in August and September as a time for prayer, reflection, and discussion. In some of these gatherings, one person will volunteer to share a story of an experience that helped to shape or grow their faith, and then discussion will proceed from there.

In other gatherings, discussion will focus on the lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday worship service.

The recently concluded July discussion series focused on issues of racial justice and equity. Conversations were lively and thought-provoking. Members shared their questions and reflections about such issues as the meaning of systemic racism and white privilege. We also discussed steps that Immanuel members might take to collaborate with our sisters and brothers in the Evanston community to fight racism.

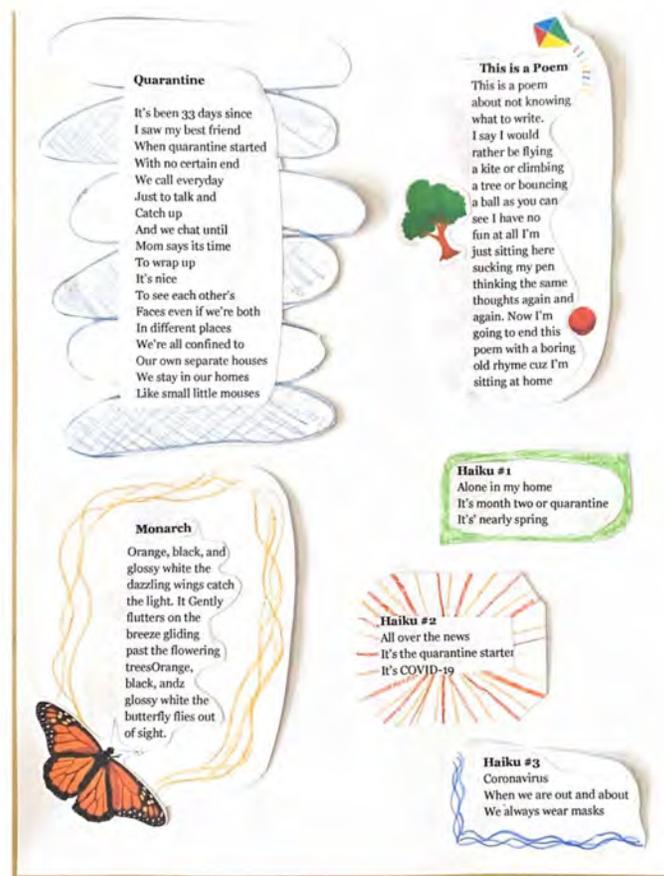
We hope that you will join us from 7:00 to 8:00 pm on Zoom on Wednesdays in August and September to spend time in prayer, discussion around the Word, and conversation with your Immanuel sisters and brothers!

Look for a zoom link in an eblast to join this meeting.

*Yours in Christ,
Charly Yarnoff*



More Pandemic Prose...



Click to read poems by Sunday School Student Elora Kloster.

Puzzled by the New Normal?

We've been doing jigsaw puzzles at my house. It's a nice way to pass some time and I am always reminded of important life/spiritual lessons, hiding right there among all those pieces.

1. Start with the easy stuff
2. The whole comes together one piece at a time--one step at a time, one day at a time, or 'let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day'
3. The right piece goes in effortlessly
4. I always think there's a missing piece
5. Every piece is important, from the most flashy to the most dull
6. Appreciate the subtle differences, for each one makes the puzzle whole
7. Step away, and vision is refreshed
8. Sometimes there really IS a missing piece!



Usually in a summer I get to look forward to those times of awe and wonder when we travel--like a couple years ago when the Black Canyon of the Gunnison River in Colorado absolutely took my breath away--and I shiver a little bit as I feel the presence of God in creation. This summer, it's a still, small voice of insight in the jigsaw puzzles that reminds me of God's presence in these days of at-home sameness.

Linda Edlund

The Call Committee (Tom Couch, Chris Djuric, Anne Heider, Tyler Heyl, Michael Kloster, Lisa Larson) have spent June and July preparing to interview pastor candidates.

We've developed interview questions, prepared information about Immanuel to share, discussed processes for conducting interviews and evaluating candidates, and we were fortunate to be able to conduct a mock interview to practice.

We received nominations of two individuals for pastoral candidates from Immanuel members, and those names were given to Pr. Robert Biekman, Immanuel's Metro-Chicago Synod liaison.

The prayers and encouragement of our Immanuel community are sustaining to the committee and we ask that you continue to pray as we wait to receive our first round of candidates.

Lisa Larson

Reopening Task Force

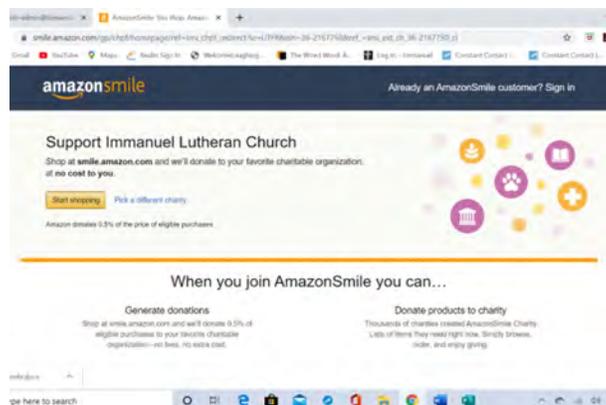


Hello Immanuel Brothers and Sisters. We are working hard on your behalf to explore what is involved in considering re-opening our church building to worship and other activities. Of course we want your input in order to be responsive to your expectations. You already have, or soon will, receive a survey to complete to let us know your thoughts about re-opening. Thank you in advance for completing the survey.

We have met regularly to discuss the guidelines provided by the synod and how those apply to Immanuel. We will meet with Church Council in August to present a preliminary outline of our work thus far. Then, in September we will provide a more complete presentation that includes your input from the surveys. We have reached out to other committees in the church and will continue to do so as needed. Thank you for the continued prayers for this effort. In the meantime, we are blessed to have good worship via Zoom and we thank the team that makes that happen each week.

Greg Hummel, Grace Yarnoff, and Kit McCarthy

Do You Shop on Amazon?



A reminder notice: Many of us make frequent purchases on Amazon ... books, appliances, shampoo ... you name it, you can find almost anything there. Did you know

that Amazon will donate .5% of any eligible purchase you make to Immanuel Lutheran Church? That's right. You buy things, and without spending a penny more than you would otherwise, Amazon sends us a check to help support our ministry.

All you need to do is to sign up with Amazon Smile, which is a simple matter of following this link and selecting Immanuel Lutheran Church, Evanston, IL as your preferred charity.

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2167750>

(Or you can go to www.smile.amazon.com and search for "Immanuel Lutheran Church Evanston.")

Then, each time you shop with Amazon, instead of going to the Amazon site as you normally would, go to www.smile.amazon.com to make your purchases. It's exactly the same as the regular Amazon site, but it links your purchases to Immanuel. (Once you've registered Immanuel as your charity, even if you go to the regular site, it will ask you if you prefer to go to the Amazon Smile site instead, so you don't even have to remember!) There is no cost to you whatsoever, and with each purchase, you will be supporting the ministry of ILC! If you have questions, please ask Susan Ross at cross847@aol.com.

"Call a Congregant"



Thank you to everyone who has been updating their Realm accounts. As you browse the Realm Directory, how about reaching out to someone you've not seen nor spoken to in while? Though we're not gathering in-person, Immanuel still lives! It does so even more when we connect with one another.

Also, if you haven't done so, please send your Next of Kin/Emergency Contact Info to parish-admin@ilcevanston.org.

2020-21 ILC Leadership

Scott Romans, *Congregation President*

Melisa Larson, *Congregation Vice President*

Sara Krentz, *Congregation Secretary*

Tom Couch, Linda Edlund, Greg Hummel,

Melisa Larson, Dana Barron, Bert Mount,

Erik Shearer, Jim Skelton, Grace Yarnoff

Congregation Council Members

Susan Ross, *Treasurer*

Mary Ann Kearns, *Financial Secretary*

Elizabeth Stegner, *Assistant Financial Secretary*



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