

November 2020 Newsletter

A Word from Interim Pastor Kim

Aili Rajala and the Overflowing Money Dish

In our 20-year settled ministry in the Upper Peninsula, Aili Rajala must have told us the story of the overflowing money dish at least 20 times. It went down like this:



At the end of the church potluck table groaning with hot dish, came the money dish. People might throw something in, and it always helped a bit toward whatever it was being dedicated to. But there was this one day, Aili said, that people had been tossing in bills and they started to spill out over the sides of the bowl. Everyone got giddy. And for the joy of it, they started tossing more in until it truly overflowed.

I guess you had to be there. But she told this story over and over and every time you could see the joy well up again. The way the joy and the excitement grew in the little community around the table that night. The sense that together they could build on what they had toward abundance. The way they encouraged one another into that generosity, into contributing what they had toward something bigger than themselves and larger than what they alone possessed. And the way Aili told this story – and the frequency with which she told it! - made you realize that it was one of those guiding stories for her, about God and church and life and community. It wasn't the money, so much as the joy of giving.

I wasn't there the day the money dish overflowed in Amasa. But I was at your God's Work Our Hands fundraiser for Swedish Covenant medical staff meals from Prairie Grass Café. And I definitely felt what Aili was feeling and had the experience she was talking about in the kind of abundant generosity that led us to raise the goal twice in a half an hour.

Here's the thing: there were some large gifts. But that wasn't all there was to the sense of swelling generosity. There was one of your youngest members who shared out of his piggy bank – what he had. There was the joy of another young member offering up a card trick. And another making dream catchers for us to catch our dreams. There was the rising goal. And rich cakes, and sumptuous quilts and warm shawls you could practically feel through the zoom screen. Landscape cards and handcrafted cards and ... what we had to share. What each of us had. The love that we had. The creativity that we had. And yes, the way that gifts large and small together overflowed the money dish, that I know made me chip in with joy a little more than I might have thought I would at first when I saw what we could do together and how my part could fit into the whole. You inspired me.

That's what Immanuel does. That's what it can do. That's the joy of your generosity. We conclude our fall stewardship season on November 22 as we dedicate this year's pledges that will seed the mission we're able to engage in 2021. It's the seedbed for the future with your new pastor.

We know that for many of our families, things have changed. And the growing needs and challenges of our communities are real. But the joy in generosity gets infectious when we realize that it's what we can do together, when we offer in joy and thanksgiving what God has given us to share, that builds our community and brings us into the kin-dom of God. We bring what we have. God makes it overflow. We experience joy.

*Interim Pastor Kim Beckmann
pastor@immanuelevanston.org*

November Sunday Scripture Readings

November 1, All Saints Day

Revelation 7:9-17
Psalm 34:1-20, 22
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12

November 8, Pentecost 23

Amos 5:18-24
Psalm 70
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Matthew 23:1-13

November 15, Pentecost 24

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18
Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Matthew 25:14-30

November 22,

Christ the King

Ezekiel 24:11-16, 20-24
Psalm 95:1-7a
Ephesians 1:15-23
Matthew 25:31-46



November 29, Advent 1

Isaiah 64:1-9
Ps 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Cor 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

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

Worship Matters

November 8th

We're invited to a wedding and a funeral today... and Jesus comes to meet us at each. When will these events take place? Where's the save the date card? That's the thing. We don't know. Stay awake!! Amen, Come Lord Jesus!

November 15th Dedication of the Stark Memorial Fund Grants

A landowner goes on a journey and entrusts their wealth to servants, expecting them to do something with it. Anna Stark bequeathed the remainder of her estate to Immanuel to be endowed to foster mission. We bless and dedicate this year's mission grants and celebrate the stewardship of Anna Stark's life, the communities, congregations and organizations that will receive these gifts. We lean into God's generosity and call for us to serve the gospel!

November 22nd The Reign of Christ – Dedication of 2021 Pledges

The Reign of Christ is the New Year's Eve of the church year, a year of grace. We end with the name above every other name and the vision of God's kin-dom come. On this day we bring our plans for sharing our selves, our time and our possessions, in service to Christ, and offer up them up with a prayer that they may be made an occasion for shalom.

November 29th First Sunday in Advent

The wheel of time, the year of grace, is a circle. Christ is the beginning and end; the end and beginning. We start the year of Mark, and read from this shortest, most urgent of the gospels over

the next year.

The Advent Wreath – We invite each household to fashion a “wreath” with four candles to light!

The advent wreath is a reminder of that circle of time, with the four candles that help us count down the weeks to Christmas, and a fifth Christ candle for Christmas Eve. Traditionally, the color of advent was purple, the color of repentance, with a rose candle for the third Sunday, when we “lighten up” to celebrate Gaudete (Rejoice!) Sunday.



In recent years, some have moved to four blue candles, where blue is the color of hope. In other traditions, the candles are white. We'd like to invite you to find four candles (even little battery tea lights will work) and arrange them in a circle, or even a line (some traditions use birch logs!) as we pray down the gift of God's love this season. A fifth may be added for Christmas.

The Great Advent Hymns

So many great hymns, so few weeks to sing them! What are your favorites? You may not have a hymnal to rifle through. But what's the first one that comes to mind? Send your top couple favorites to Sara Krentz and/or Pastor Kim at pastor@immanuelevanston.org by November 15th!

Zoom Readers or Assisting Ministers

Does our online format make it more possible for you to participate in these ministries? Let Pastor Kim or Sara Krentz know if you'd like to serve in this way! All ages and new voices and newcomers welcome!

All Saints Photo Memorial

[Click here](#) to see the All Saints Sunday Photo Memorial accompanied by the choir singing, "The Lily of the Valley." We give thanks for these ancestors of the faith and thank all who submitted pictures. Thank you to Music Director Jimmy Morehead, who created this beautiful and heartfelt memorial.

WE ARE ALIVE IN THE SPIRIT AND ACTIVE IN MISSION!

How to Participate in This Year's Experience

Read Intentionally: The invitation letter by President Scott Romans in your mailed or emailed packet.

Reflect Prayerfully: Consider your blessings and commitments to God and our household of faith, noting any changes in your circumstances this year and how they may be reflected and expressed. There is a proportional giving tool that may help. Consider if automated giving is a new possibility for you as we worship remotely.

Respond Joyfully: Fill out the commitment card electronically and email to giving@immanuelevanston.org or

Fill out the commitment card(s) by hand and mail to:
Immanuel Lutheran Church Attn: Mary Ann Kearns; 616 Lake Street, Evanston
IL 60201

Return Thankfully: Please respond before November 20 ahead of our gathering on November 22

Attend Worshipfully!

October 25, Reformation Kick Off -- *Michael and Elora Kloster: We Worship God*

November 1, All Saints Day -- *Terri Hummel: We Build Community*

November 8 -- *Ayla Pizzo: We Welcome Everyone*

Attend A Special Coffee Hour To Review Immanuel's Financial Stewardship
Mary Ann Kearns & Susan Ross share our status at 3rd quarter

November 15 -- *Diane Keely: We Work for Social Justice*

November 22, Reign of Christ -- *All: Dedicating our commitments on the Church Year's "New Year's Eve"*

Immanuel Sunday School Spend Some Time with Our Fabulous Youth!



Our children are enthusiastic leaders and participants in Immanuel's life. We give thanks for those who are meeting with them every other week before church service, and nurturing their

spiritual growth.

We are looking for one or two additional Sunday School teachers. There are materials that are adaptable and our children and youth are a delight. Let Pastor Kim know if you'd be willing to hear more about the opportunity to spend time with our younger members, exploring the foundations of faith and life!

Anti-Racism Initiative

As we wrap up our book discussion of *White Fragility* by Robin D'Angelo this month (see next article), the anti-racism team continues to meet and consider ways Immanuel can grow in our intent to become anti-racist individuals in an anti-racist church.



Our most recent meeting reviewed the ELCA actions and resources related to anti-racism. As a result, Laura McDaniel led a Bible study using ELCAVotes materials to help us reflect on our own experiences of voting and the issues of voter suppression in light of the prophet Isaiah.

Look for more opportunities, or let Susan Ross know if you have read a book you would like to offer for discussion, know of another experience our congregation could be invited into, or if there is a topic you are hoping to learn more about in your journey in anti-racism.

White Fragility Book Discussion #3

Tuesday, November 10, 7-8 pm

Diane Keely, Discussion Leader

Our third and final discussion of Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility* will

cover Chapters 8-12. We look forward to sharing more thoughts, perspectives, questions, memories. Join us!

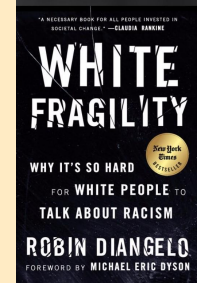
Chapter 8. The Result: White Fragility, pp. 107-113

Chapter 9. White Fragility in Action, pp. 115-122

Chapter 10. White Fragility and the Rules of Engagement, pp. 123-129

Chapter 11. White Women's Tears, pp. 131-138

Chapter 12. Where Do We Go from Here?, pp. 139-154



For those who aren't familiar with the book, here are links to several YouTube videos featuring Robin D'Angelo and her work:

- Michel Martin Extended Conversation with Robin DiAngelo on "White Fragility"/ Amanpour and Company, Jun 12, 2020 (17:13), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qx-gUfQx4-Q&t=592s>
- Dr. Robin DiAngelo on "Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism"/Justice Reconciliation, Jan 17, 2020 (1:04:02), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0Bw0hiDFI4&t=89s>
- "A Discussion About Race" with Beverly Daniel Tatum and Robin DiAngelo/American Council on Education, Apr 9, 2019 (1:01:26), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zsxy_ah6g2A
- "Deconstructing White Privilege" with Dr. Robin DiAngelo/General Commission on Religion and Race of the UMC, Mar 20, 2020 (20:01), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7mzj0cVL0Q&t=144s>
- Authors Robin DiAngelo and Ibram X. Kendi on "How to Become Aware of Privilege"/CBS This Morning, Jun 5, 2020 (6:30), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dteOQPzc_so&t=210s

Click on this link to join the Zoom meeting:

<https://northwestern.zoom.us/j/98666938623> . Thanks again to Charly Yarnoff for the Zoom links. Hope to see you soon!

Diane Keely

God's Work Our Hands Zoom-athon



During our Zoom coffee hour on Sunday, October 11th, many hands joined together in a Zoom-athon to raise money to provide meals for frontline healthcare workers at Swedish Covenant Hospital. Prairie Grass Cafe prepares these top-quality meals using produce from local farmers.

The Zooma-thon was undertaken in the spirit of the ELCA annual day of service, "Gods Work. Our Hands." Our goal was to raise \$1,200 -- enough to pay for meals for workers during two night shifts at the hospital. So generous were the participants that \$2,897 was raised, nearly enough for five shifts!

Immanuel members also stepped up by providing beautiful handmade gift items to incentivize donations and by entertaining us with music and magic to keep the energy level high during the event. The [gofundme](#) page is still open, so you're encouraged to donate to this worthy cause to nourish healthcare workers on the front lines of the pandemic.

Midweek Adult Spiritual Growth Continues throughout November & December

JOIN US ON ZOOM ON WEDNESDAYS FROM 7 PM - 8:15 PM

November 4, 11 and 18th: We continue our pattern of gathering prayer, considering one or two of our readings for Sundays, and ending with compline prayer and song.

November 25: Thanksgiving Eve Gathering: We'll sing some harvest home songs, gather around a virtual table to share our thanksgivings, enjoy conversation as a household of faith, and join in prayer.

December 2, 9, 16, 23: Advent Holden Evening Prayer with meditation/discussion



Bring a bible if you are able, any version or translation is great, hard-bound or on the web such as <https://www.biblegateway.com>. Look for the weekly eblast or go to www.immanuelevanston.org/calendar for the zoom links and info.

Stark Mission Grants for 2020

The Stark Mission Endowment committee met this August along with finance team for the joy of stewarding Anna Stark's legacy gift, and her intent that God's good news she experienced her in life continue to be shared in our community and around the globe. Earlier this year, we expended \$1,000 from 2019 grant. We decided our target for this year, and into the future, was to be \$2,000 to grow and preserve her original principal of \$100,000. You are invited into the celebration of the dedication of these gifts during our offering on November 15th.

· *\$750 to Unity/Mision Unidada, Berwyn for confirmation class/youth Christian Education for this affiliated worshiping community.*

Unity Lutheran Church in Berwyn is a unique ministry. It hosts an Affiliated Worshiping Community within the congregation: Mision Unidada, served by Vicar Maria Rojas. This mission reaches out to specifically to members of the LGBTQIA+ Latinx community. Beginning worship in August of 2019, they have about 30-40 families. They have children and youth in this ministry but have not been able to fund budget for a suitable confirmation/Christian education program for bilingual students from these families. To read more about this ministry that has touched the lives of those who didn't know they would be able to find a church home, read this article in the [Metro Chicago Synod Newsletter](#).

· *\$250 to Awake! 501c3 of Unity Lutheran Berwyn for Covid 19 Assistance for those neighbors on the front line in minimum wage jobs and those ineligible for government aid due to their immigration status.*

The second initiative of Unity Lutheran Church in Berwyn is "Awake!". Awake reaches out into the community to build relationships, leadership, and justice. The COVID-19 crisis impacts everyone in Berwyn, but it is most devastating to our neighbors who work minimum-wage jobs or who are ineligible for government assistance due to their immigration status. Awake responded by creating the Berwyn Community COVID-19 Assistance Fund to support friends and neighbors with \$500 mini-grants to help with rent, utilities,

and other necessities. There are still households awaiting funding. Read more about [Awake!](#)

· *\$500 to Lutheran Disaster Relief for US Wildfires*

Lutheran Disaster Relief is us and it is there - and ready - working through relationships with agencies on the ground, whenever crisis strikes. This year, we are earmarking a portion of the distribution for the tragedy of the West Coast Wildfires. [Lutheran Disaster Response to US Fires](#)

· *\$500 to Interfaith Action of Evanston*

Interfaith Action of Evanston is no stranger to Immanuel. [IAE](#) has risen to the challenge of COVID by finding new ways to provide its direct services to our hungry and/or homeless neighbors. By sending \$500, we recognize the extra efforts and expense incurred.

By Council action we have just right-sized the committee from 6 to 5 members. If this is an area of service that seems interesting to you, let us know on your 2021 pledge form, or share your interest with committee chair Laurie Stivers.

Call Committee

In October, the Call Committee (Tom Couch, Chris Djuric, Anne Heider, Tyler Heyl, Michael Kloster, Lisa Larson) interviewed two candidates and reviewed additional candidate Information such as video recordings of preaching and/or presiding in worship, work samples, and social media presence.



The committee and one of the candidates chose to end the discernment process after the first interview. We interviewed the remaining candidate again. After additional research and discussion, we chose to release the candidate and request a new round of candidates. While we could identify facets of each candidate's ministry, style and strengths that matched parts of Immanuel's *Ministry Site Profile*, the committee did not believe that either candidate was the right fit for our congregation.

Immanuel's synod liaison in the call process, Pr. Robert Biekman, provided *Rostered Minister Profiles* for two additional candidates to the Committee and interviews are being scheduled for early November.

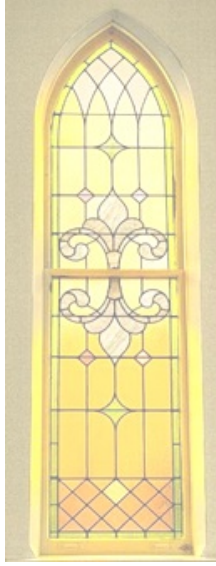
The Call Committee is so appreciative of all of the congregation's support through prayers, supplying documents (Jim Skelton & Jane), and the continuing work to clean up our building (Laurie Stivers, Linda Edlund, Kathy Skelton, Property Committee, & those working on the landscaping).

Lisa Larson

Reopening Reminder

I reported in last month's newsletter on the hard work of Immanuel's Reopening Task Force and the decisions Council has made to plan for the future.

I'd like to reiterate that, while Council reaffirmed earlier votes to suspend in-person worship and group activities on church premises, we are trying to be flexible and responsive to the needs and



interests of the congregation.

The task force stands ready to advise anyone who wants to plan for any activity in the church involving more than one person to ensure that it is safe and consistent with state and local guidance as well as Council's decisions. **Working with the Task Force also allows us to get your activity onto the church calendar so others who might also need to be in the church can work around your schedule.**

If you have an activity that will involve more than one person on the church premises, please reach out to Greg Hummel, Chair of the Task Force, or to myself. Thank you for your cooperation.

*Scott Romans
President, Congregational Council*

November Birthdays

Rosemary Gurujal 11/2
Dana Barron 11/4
Thomas Nakic 11/5
Edward Carlson 11/11
Christine Imhoff 11/12
Jack Cudecki 11/13
Jean Kantner 11/15
Scott Romans 11/29
Mesrop Darian 11/30

Pandemic Prose



Advice for Solitary Holidays

It would appear this persistent pandemic is going to take our holidays, too. Remember back to March, when we went still for what we thought would be two weeks and had such a can-do spirit? Right.

Dr. Fauci's statement about how we're all going to need to 'hunker down' for a 'long, dark winter' put me in a tailspin, and the re-imposition of mitigations with our soaring case/hospital/death numbers gifted me another. And now, there's Thanksgiving.

I've had a lot of solitary holidays, and they're not fun. Even with a terrific husband now, there's nothing 'special' about sitting down to dinner just the two of us--it takes guests (or an invitation!) to make a holiday! And those tried-and-true strategies of inviting stranded college students or service members to share our tables with us, or volunteering at a

Boredom Busters

When it became clear we're in for a 'long, dark winter', as it's so cheerily been described, I had some panic of the "However are we going to get through this?" variety. (I had a meltdown, too, just for the record). Then for some reason I thought of the perennial Infrastructure Weeks of the current president--and I thought 'WEEKS!! I can do this a week at a time!

I had a Get a Grip Week, a Home Organization Week (the pantry was reorganized and I made myself a new little desk/work area for Zooms and painting classes), Have Some Fun Week was a little socially-distanced getaway for a couple nights in Galena, Bits and Pieces

communal meal, are not workable strategies this year. So here are some thoughts about this situation.

- Absolutely do NOT try to convince yourself it's 'just another day', because no otherwise emotionally-laden holiday can be just another day
- Do NOT hide under the covers, unless you're actually ill--this is pitiful and makes a hard day harder
- Join in on Thanksgiving Eve worship (and a big thank you to those who are putting it together!)
- Call your friends or family on the day and share your plans and menus and maybe some favorite stories from happier holidays
- Set up a Zoom dinner with family members and have dinner 'together'
- If cooking for yourself doesn't bring you deep pleasure, order a lovely, special dinner delivered from a local restaurant (i.e., treat yourself!) and tip generously
- Likewise, have some flowers delivered--they'll cheer your heart for days
- Set a lovely table for yourself--the good china, candles, cloth napkins, the whole nine yards
- Play some favorite music, watch a favorite movie, or start a new jigsaw puzzle
- At the end of the day, breathe thanks that a difficult day is over and that you coped with it remarkably!

Linda Edlund

Week took two weeks because I got called in to work for four days.

Ahead are Anxious Wreck (i.e., election) Week, Online Travel Week, Cookie-Baking Week. You get the idea. Set some goals, plan activities around the theme, tell all your friends what you're doing for the week. I've become more focused again, goal-oriented, and more creative. Phew!

I can see where goals for spiritual growth could be set and pursued, weeks devoted to books of the Bible or exploration of cross-cultural origin stories or kinds of prayer. Whatever interests you!

Linda Edlund

Community Matters

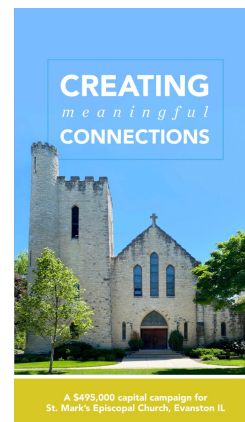
IAC Hospitality Center for the Homeless Capital Improvements Needed

Every weekday morning, St. Mark's Episcopal Church opens its doors to guests to the Interfaith Action Council (IAC) Hospitality Center for the Homeless. There they get support from a job coordinator, make phone calls about jobs or apartments, learn computer and other job skills, and, most importantly, find a place that welcomes them.

To make needed improvements to the Hospitality Center - upgrade bathrooms, reconfigure the space to better accommodate guests and their needs - St. Mark's is conducting a capital campaign. The funds raised are earmarked for the Center, as well as for a new elevator, which will improve accessibility to the Center.

Your gift will make it possible to enhance the welcoming environment of the Hospitality Center and further our mission of bringing people together to serve hungry and homeless people, pursue interfaith dialogue, and engage in advocacy that promotes social justice.

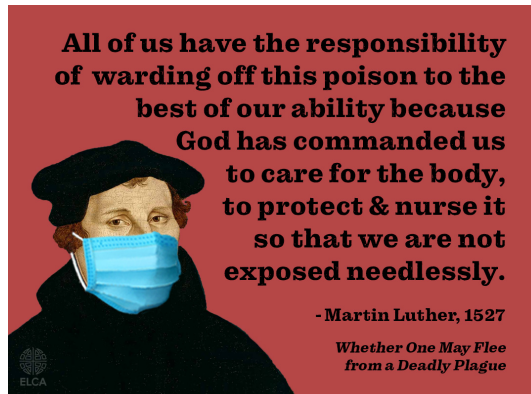
You can make a contribution through Interfaith Action by going to our website at



<https://interfaithactionofevanston.networkforgood.com/projects/112313-hospitality-center-fund> or sending a check to Interfaith Action of Evanston, P.O. Box 1414, Evanston IL 60204. Be sure to put St. Mark's in the subject line.

Creating a Healthy Society

Protect yourself and your neighbors – wear a mask, practice physical distancing and wash your hands. We all share the responsibility for creating a healthy society, as Martin Luther reminds us in his 1527 essay “Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague.”



Happy Thanksgiving!

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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