

God's Hands—March 2024

Some Food for Thought from the Pastor

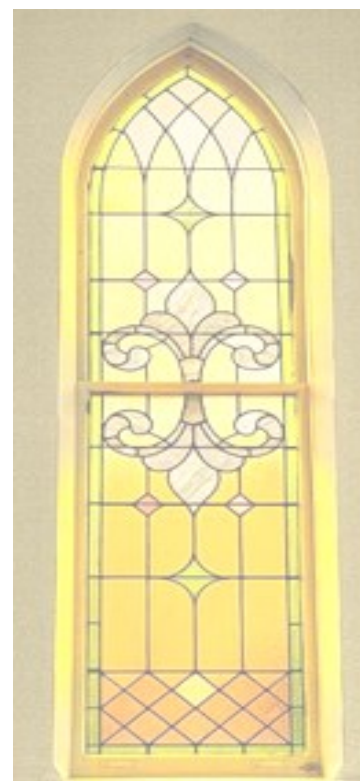
The reality of our dying is woven into the fabric of our lives. Susan and I have been dealing with aging parents. As we see their health declining as they move closer to their last day alive on this earth, while still grieving the death of Susan's father just over a year ago, we've become more aware of our own mortality. Plus, I have the We Croak app on my phone that reminds me 5 times a day that I'm going to die. Keeping death in daily focus may seem to be depressing and ominous, yet it truly can be a source of meaning and joy. It can assist us in living more full and abundant lives. Conscious of our mortality, we're more apt not to waste our lives in trivial pursuits, and instead engage in what we deem most meaningful.

Lent, which culminates with Holy Week at the end of the month, provides opportunity to reflect on our mortality alongside Jesus' death and resurrection. As an experiment I wondered what Artificial Intelligence might generate if I asked it to generate an essay combining the themes of Lent, Holy Week, and reflecting on our own mortality. So, I asked ChatGPT, and was surprised with what it came up with. Here is my revised edited version of the essay it produced:

Lent and Holy Week hold a sacred space in the Christian calendar, providing a period of profound reflection and spiritual contemplation. Amidst the rituals and traditions, a theme that resonates throughout these seasons is the awareness of mortality. The acknowledgment of our finite existence becomes a powerful catalyst for introspection, repentance, and renewal during this sacred journey. The awareness of mortality during Lent becomes a guiding force, urging believers to reassess their priorities and strive for spiritual growth.

The Ash Wednesday ritual, marking the beginning of Lent, emphasizes the fragility of life with the imposition of ashes on foreheads accompanied by the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust, you shall return." This solemn reminder sets the tone for a season dedicated to embracing mortality as a transformative process. Holy Week guides believers through the final days of Jesus' earthly journey. The events of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday invite Christians to confront the harsh reality of mortality, as they witness the betrayal, crucifixion, and burial of Jesus Christ.

Maundy Thursday, commemorating the Last Supper, prompts reflection on the brevity of life and the importance of love and service. The washing of feet, a humble act performed by Jesus, encourages believers to emulate his selfless example and recognize the transient nature of worldly achievements. Good Friday, the day of Christ's crucifixion, is a poignant moment that forces individuals to confront the harshness of mortality. The crucifixion narrative invites contemplation on the mysterious redemptive power of sacrifice and the fleeting nature of earthly existence. Holy Saturday, the day of Jesus' entombment, becomes a time of waiting and introspection. Believers immerse themselves in the grief of the disciples, realizing that even in moments of despair, there is hope for resurrection and eternal life.



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Immanuel Calendar



Mar. 1		First Day Women's History Month Organ Scholar Jury Day
Mar. 2, 16	8:00 am	Indoor Farmers' Market
Mar. 5, 12 19, 26	Noon	Midweek Spiritual Discussion on Zoom
Mar. 6	10:00 am	Group Spiritual Direction
Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27	6:00 pm 7:00 pm	Lenten Soup Suppers Midweek Lenten Evening Prayer Service
Mar. 7, 21	9:00 am	Daytime Quilters
Mar. 9	10:00 am	Trombone Choir Rehearsal
Mar. 12	7:00 pm	Group Spiritual Direction
Mar. 14, 21	7:30 pm	Wilmette Band Rehearsals
Mar. 17	12:30 pm	Council Meeting/St. Patrick's Day
Mar. 21	7:00 pm	Group Spiritual Direction
Mar. 24	10:30 am	Passion/Palm Sunday
Mar. 28	7:30 pm	Maundy Thursday Service
Mar. 29	7:30 pm	Good Friday Service
Mar. 30	7:30 pm	Easter Vigil
Mar. 31	10:30 am	Easter Sunday

Be sure to check the Church Calendar online at www.immanuelevanston.org/Calendar for the latest info on church events and building usage.

March Scripture Readings

March 3, Lent 3

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

March 10, Lent 4

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

March 17, Lent 5

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrew 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

March 24, Passion/Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Mark 14:1-15:47

March 28, Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

March 29, Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10:16-25

John 18:1-19:42

March 30, Easter Vigil

Romans 6:3-11
John 20:1-18

March 31, Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-8

Revised Common Lectionary daily readings can be found at <https://www.dailylectio.net/calendar>

Music at Immanuel

March Music

The choir has some lovely contributions to worship as we wrap up Lent and walk into Holy Week. We begin March with a lovely chorale setting by Felix Mendelssohn called "Out of the Depths I Cry to you." We then turn to a beloved choral favorite by John Stainer with text from John 3:16, "God So Love the World."



Our final Sunday features a setting of Psalm 51 by Susan Mitsui called "Create a Pure Heart in Me."

We march into Holy Week with Patti Drennan's rousing Palm Sunday anthem "Ride On, King Jesus!," which incorporates the famous spiritual. A new setting of "Ubi Caritas" by Ola Gjeilo begins our great three days on Maundy Thursday. Good Friday has Felice Anerio's "Christus factus est" by the choir. We celebrate Easter Vigil with some beloved favorites like Palenstrina's "Sicut Cervus" and Anne Heider's arrangement of "Go Down Moses." We are joined Easter Sunday with brass quartet who join the choir with Samuel Barber's "Easter Chorale." The anthem is a rousing mixed meter "Christ Is Risen! He Is Risen Indeed" for organ, brass and SATB choir.

—Jimmy Morehead

Feeding Our Faith

Sundays 9 AM—10 AM

Gatherings include viewing short videos and lively discussions.

You can participate either in-person or via Zoom. All participants will have an enhanced experience by being able to see and hear each other, via an Owl Labs 360-degree view video camera/speaker/microphone! Zoom link is on the church website, www.immanuelevanston.org.

Through March 3: Contemplative Vision: Awakening to Beauty, Truth, and Goodness

As we enter the Lenten and Easter Seasons, we'll watch and discuss videos from a conference put on by Contemplative Outreach in 2007 featuring Father Richard Rohr and Father Thomas Keating, two renowned teachers of contemplative spirituality. Richard Rohr is a prolific author and speaker who founded the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Thomas Keating, who died in 2018, was a Trappist monk known as one of the principal developers of Centering Prayer, a contemporary method of contemplative prayer. Contemplation is the well from which all our action in doing justice flows. It keeps the fire of God's love burning and inhibits our burning out.

March 10 & 17 - New Member Inquiry - Leaders of different ministries at Immanuel will share about the various ways we seek to be God's hands and feet in the world with anyone who desires to learn more and perhaps become a member of the congregation. Email Pastor Mark at pastor@immanuelevanston.org if you're interested in participating.

March 24 & 31 No Class for Palm Sunday (joint procession around Raymond Park with other are congregations) and Easter Sunday

Lenten Activities Continue

Remaining Lenten Activities and Worship will be held on March 6, 13, 20, and 27. All dates are Wednesdays.

All are invited to nourish themselves in body and spirit with the delicious **Soup Suppers** prepared by volunteers, beginning at 6 pm in Fellowship Hall.

At 7:00 pm we will move to the sanctuary for **Midweek Lenten Evening Prayers**. The Zoom option is available for these services, so you are also welcome to participate from home.

See you there!



—Sara Krentz, Chair, Worship & Music Committee

Continued from page 1....

The conscious acknowledgment of mortality during Lent and Holy Week serves as a catalyst for personal transformation. It prompts individuals to reassess their priorities, cultivate gratitude for the gift of life, and deepen their connection with the divine. The awareness of our finite existence fosters a sense of humility, encouraging believers to live purposefully and love unconditionally, guiding individuals towards repentance, renewal, and a deeper connection with the divine. Embracing mortality during this sacred season allows Christians to navigate life with a heightened sense of purpose, gratitude, and a steadfast faith in the promise of resurrection.

On second thought I shouldn't be surprised at what AI generated, as it draws from our collective human wisdom. I was impressed though with how thoroughly it made the connections that I asked of it giving me a great template from which to work my revisions. If you're curious of what the unedited version was like, then go try it yourself and see what it generates for you. In any case I hope and pray that this brief reflection gives you some appetizing food for thought as we continue our journey this month to the cross and empty tomb.

Deep Blessings,

Pastor Mark



Holy Week at Immanuel 2024

Palm Sunday March 24th

Meet at 8:45 am



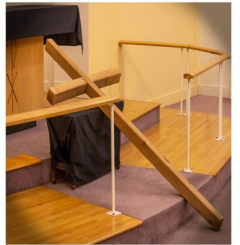
Maundy Thursday March 28th

6:30 pm Meal
7:30 pm Worship



Good Friday March 29th

7:30 pm Worship



Easter Vigil March 30th

7:30 pm Worship



Easter Sunday March 31st

10:30 am Worship



Food and Personal Care Items needed for Northwestern University's Purple Pantry

According to a 2023 article in the journal Public Health, one-third of all college students in the U.S. experience food insecurity--"inconsistent access to enough food to meet basic needs"--because of lack of money or other resources. This rate is greater than the national average for all households. Northwestern University's Purple Pantry addresses this problem by providing food and other essential items to students. These are the needed items:



Non-perishable foods

- Canned beans and vegetables
- Oil
- Rice
- Cereal and oatmeal
- Breakfast/protein bars and other snacks
- Soups, broths, and Ramen

Personal care

- Feminine hygiene products
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Soap
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste

Bring donations to the Indoor Farmer's Market on March 2nd.



FINAL MONTH OF 2023-24 INDOOR FARMERS MARKET SEASON

Market is open 8:00 AM – 12:30 PM on the following Saturdays:

March 2 (NU Purple Pantry Day)

March 16-LAST MARKET

Donations for Immigrants

Chi Welcome, our partner in the distribution network, is requesting that donors compile Kitchen Starter Packs. Please see the list below and assemble a pack with only the items specified below. Donation Packs will be collected on Thursdays only, 9 am—Noon.

Every week, Volunteers Chris, Kit, Keziah, Roxanne and others work hard in Fellowship Hall assembling the kits and getting them ready for pick up by Chi Welcome. Some dinnerware, utensils, and silverware used by Immanuel members decades ago for the church potlucks and smorgasbords are getting new life in the Kitchen Starter Packs. A bonus for church is we're decluttering and getting more storage space! If you have a couple of hours to spare on Thursday mornings, come join the group!

Thank you for your support of this ministry

MARCH

BIRTHDAYS

Emmett Hanson 3/2

Sara Mauk 3/3

Christine Kraemer 3/5

Mark Kraemer 3/7

Amy Shearer 3/8

Anne Heider 3/10

Terri Hummel 3/13

Charly Yarnoff 3/13

Kevin McDaniel 3/17

Barbara Huffman 3/20

Daniel McCarthy 3/21

Bert Mount 3/26



KITCHEN STARTER PACK

4 Place Settings

4 Mugs

2 Dish Towels

1 Pot with Lid

1 Pan

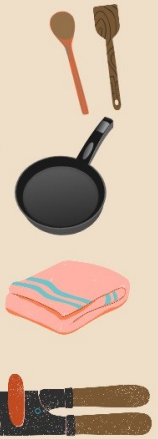
1 Set Cooking Utensils

1 Cutting Board and Knife

1 Can Opener

1 Mixing Size Bowl

1 Dish Soap and Sponge



Pack everything into a bag, box, or sturdy container like a laundry basket. Drop off at Immanuel Lutheran Church on Thursdays from 9-12.



Photos by Joe Simchak,
Pr. Mark Sloss

Quilters Close Out Another Successful Year

Milestone Hit with 209 Quilts Made!

The church was a beehive of activity as the Quilters finished up the last of their quilts before Quilt Blessing Sunday on Feb. 4, 2024. A grand total of 209 quilts were sewn this year; exceeding all past totals-to-date. The quilts were packed up and sent to another distribution point and are headed to Lutheran World Relief locations.

Congratulations to our industrious quilters and their love and devotion to the art of quilting! They're already starting on next year's quilts, so if you'd like to join a heart-warming cause, meet at Immanuel's Quilting Studio downstairs. Quilters meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month, 9:00 am—Noon.



Photos by Joe Simchak

Evanston Interfaith Clergy & Leaders



Immanuel Hosts EICL February 2024 Monthly Luncheon

On Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024, Immanuel was the host church for the February Luncheon Meeting of the Evanston Interfaith Clergy & Leaders.

Sue Loelbach of *Connections for the Homeless* spoke about *Joining Forces for Affordable Housing*, a group which focuses on a range of issues related to local, regional and state affordable housing needs and barriers. She discussed the two crises facing the Chicago area—the systemic lack of affordable housing which has plagued longtime citizens of the communities and the emergency lack of housing with the arrival of newcomers from Texas.

Sue's presentation included ideas where religious organizations/houses of worship collaborate on creating opportunities for affordable housing and YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard) advocacy (vs. NIMBY-not in my back yard).

Also from EICL....

Many Faiths, One Book

Sunday, March 24, 2024

2:00 pm

**Unitarian Church of Evanston,
1330 Ridge Avenue Evanston, IL
60201**

On March 24th we will be hosting a book discussion on *APEIROGON* by Colum McCann, which tells a fictionalized account of two fathers in the Parents' Circle - Families Forum, one Israeli and one Palestinian both

MANY FAITHS, ONE BOOK

EVANSTON INTERFAITH CLERGY INVITES
THE COMMUNITY TO READ AND DISCUSS

APEIROGON
by Colum McCann

FACILITATED DISCUSSION

WITH EVANSTON INTERFAITH CLERGY
SUNDAY, MARCH 24 AT 2:00
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



APEIROGON

A NOVEL

COLUM
McCANN

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD-WINNING
AUTHOR OF LET THE GREAT WORLD SPIN

of whom lose their daughters to the violence in Israel/Palestine.

The Parents Circle – Families Forum is a joint Israeli-Palestinian organization made up of more than 700 bereaved families. Their common bond is that they have lost a close family member to the conflict. But instead of choosing revenge, they have chosen a path of reconciliation.

Through the different works of the PCFF, these bereaved members have joined together to take tens of thousands of Palestinians and Israelis on their personal journeys of reconciliation. It is often raw and always emotional. But out of these interactions, comes change. Not the kind of change that makes headlines, but a more personal and profound shift in perspective. These bereaved members, armed with the credibility of their loss and the uncommon path they have chosen, have opened a crack in the psyche of a hardened populous. They have begun to stir an awareness about the conflict that transcends history and politics. For many, it is the first time they have seen “the other side” as human. The PCFF hopes for the day that political leaders reach agreement for peace. But they strongly believe that reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian people is essential to ensuring that peace is sustainable. You are also invited to attend an event on March 19th with members of the Parents' Circle hosted by JRC.



MEALS on WHEELS
NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS

Deborah Mack
Executive Director

Mike Brody
President
Jenner & Block LLP

Steve Johnson
Past President
SJ Connects

Michael McHugh
President Elect
Gallagher

Joe Wark
Secretary
Americaneagle.com

Anne Markwell
Treasurer
Advocate Condell Medical Center

February 23, 2024

Jane Kaihatsu Immanuel Lutheran Church of Evanston **From the Stark Fund**
616 Lake St
Evanston, IL 60201-4413

Dear Jane,

On behalf of the Board and staff of Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois, thank you for your generous gift to help provide meals for older adults in our community. Your donation of \$500.00 on January 15, 2024 strengthens our program and enables us to provide critical services.

Your donation helps ensure that we can provide nutritious and medically appropriate meals for our clients. Since 1968, our dedicated volunteers have delivered more than a million meals to home bound, older and disabled individuals who are unable to provide for their nutritional needs.

Please be assured that your support will be put to good use keeping seniors healthy and well while fostering their independent living.
Thank you for your generous heart!

With gratitude,

Deborah Mack
Executive Director

Thank you so much!

FOR YOUR TAX PURPOSES

Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. We acknowledge no goods or services were provided to you in return for your contribution. Please save this letter for your tax records as confirmation of your donation. Meals on Wheels Northeastern Illinois is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Please consider Meals on Wheels Northeastern IL in your estate planning.

Notes from the Parish Administrator....

Church officers, Committee and Ministry Chairs: Please check your mail slots. If you need access to the office, please contact me at parish-admin@immanuelevanston.org.

If you'd like to use a space, first please check the church calendar at www.immanuelevanston.org or contact the church office at 847-864-4464 or parish-admin@immanuelevanston.org for availability. When leaving the building, please practice good stewardship by **turning off all lights**, dumping trash properly, and **making sure doors are locked and secure**.

2024-25 ILC Leadership

Michael Kloster, Congregation President

Terri Simchak, Congregation Vice President

Dana Barron, Congregation Secretary

Susan Ross, Treasurer

Greg Hummel, Diane Keely, Jerry Larson, Kit McCarthy,
Steve Warner, Congregation Council Members

Laurie Stivers, Financial Secretary

Hybrid Tuesday Midweek Adult Bible Study

Noon—1:00 pm

Our simple mid-week gathering on Tuesdays now at the Lunch Hour in Fellowship Hall. Brown bag lunchers are welcome. This gathering offers time for spiritual growth in Word and Fellowship. Check our website Calendar at www.immanuelevanston.org or the weekly email for Zoom info and the week's themes.



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

616 Lake St.
Evanston, IL 60202

Phone: 847-864-4464

E-mail: parish-admin@ilcevanston.org

Website: www.immanuelevanston.org

Immanuel Lutheran Church is a
Reconciling in Christ congregation.

We welcome people of every age and size,
color and culture, every sexual orientation
and gender identity, socio-economic
status and marital status, every ability and
challenge. We welcome believers and
questioners, and questioning believers.