



Immanuel Lutheran Church, School  
and Child Care Center  
604 S Chestnut Ave., Marshfield, WI  
Website: [immanuelmarshfield.org](http://immanuelmarshfield.org)



April 2024

Warning! *The Ends of the LCMS* may not be suitable for the faint of heart. Its author validates that the church you and I belong to is not the church your grandparents and mine once belonged to. If you haven't noticed, here are some realities worth noting.

The pandemic had us determining who and what was "essential" and "non-essential." In many communities liquor stores were considered more essential than churches.

Where are most people today looking for advice and direction on cultural matters and issues? Not as much to the church as they once did. One in five Christians admit they are not sure if pastors are trustworthy. Instead, people are more likely to look for a church that fits with their view of things.

No surprise when it comes to the youth of today and sports. During our grandparents generation, most youth travel leagues and schools would not schedule practices or games on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings so as not to conflict with confirmation classes and worship. Today families with kids in sports are made to decide between being involved in church activities or in sports schedules. If they choose church activities over sports, their kids will be benched from participating in games.

Compared to the year 2000, weekly church attendance has dropped 12%. The pandemic opened the door to digital options where those who could join with others in worship find it more convenient to worship by themselves. This may also be influenced by how 56% of Christians believe their spiritual life is entirely private.

What about our grandparents children and their children – the generations known as Millennials, Gen Z and Gen Alpha? More and more view Christians and the church as hypocritical, judgmental, and not in line with the teachings of Jesus. These and other present realities are manifesting themselves in the LCMS. In 1960, there were about 85,000 baptisms within the LCMS. In 2013, 25,000. That's a drop of 60,000 baptisms a year over the span of fifty years.

Most of our church denomination's membership is now over the age of 50. Have you noticed how this holds true for those who are joining Immanuel? A majority of our newest members are either retired or getting closer to retirement. Where will most of today's members be in 50 years?

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In 2019, 40% of youth being confirmed in the LCMS were baptized 14 years earlier. What happened to the 60% who were baptized but were not confirmed? It doesn't get any better as upwards to 80% of LCMS-baptized children leave the LCMS by the age of 20.

During our grandparents generation, evangelism, inviting others, and being more open to sharing and talking about Jesus was part of belonging. Thirty years ago, 10% of Christians said it was not their responsibility but the local church's responsibility to reach out. Six years ago, that jumped to nearly 30%. When you ask today's younger generations, almost half say they not only think evangelism is not their responsibility, but believe it is morally wrong to be sharing and talking about Jesus.

And we all realize the shortage of LCMS church workers – pastors and teachers. Pre-seminary enrollment is down 59%. Teaching programs in our LCMS universities have seen a 61% decrease. 50% of our active LCMS pastors are 55 years or older. That includes me! We have hundreds of churches who presently do not have a called pastor leading Word and Sacrament ministry.

Speaking of our Concordia University System, which in the beginning established colleges for the recruitment and training of pastors and parochial schoolteachers, we now have fewer since the colleges we once had in Selma, Alabama, Portland, Oregon, and Bronxville, New York, have closed. Word has it that our university in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is contemplating eliminating many of its programs due to a lack of students and finances.

Things have changed! Yet to think and to give in to hopelessness, is to ignore what our grandparents and those before embraced, claimed, and would not let go of whatever the times and the challenges – their hope, *and ours* – in the resurrection! As Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit in Romans, "For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."

Patience means to keep hope in Christ. He's the One who has risen out from the dead. He's the One we place our hope especially when what we are seeing today can leave us feeling and thinking all is lost or is being lost and is hopeless. Hope in Christ means our hope is not in ourselves, or in our institutions, or in our works, but solely in the works and presence of Christ among us.

We are called to face the present realities, not always able to understand, not glorifying the past with rose-colored glasses, but moving forward together as the body of Christ, the communion of saints, and as the prophetic and apostolic church of the Scriptures.

This is what keeps me motivated to do something very simple – *invite*. Invite with no strings attached. To simply do as Jesus so often did when His invite was, "Come and see!" As it was in the past and will be until His return, we simply "Go!" and invite. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Chris

## Immanuel Lutheran School News

Springtime. It is that wonderful time of year that makes me think of new beginnings. We move from the cold winters of Wisconsin to warm days full of sunshine. I love the days when I can open the windows in the house and let fresh air fill the space. Springtime brings us our biggest hope when we celebrate Easter. We not only serve a God who creates amazing beauty, but we serve a God who loves us so very much that He sent His only Son to die on a cross for us and defeat death by rising again. I can't think of a better time than on a beautiful spring day to reflect on the love the Father has for us. The troubles of this world will fade away, but the love of God, the work on the cross, and His victory will last forever!

### Accelerated Reader Challenge

From January 22<sup>nd</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup> grades 1-8 took part in an Accelerated Reader Challenge. Accelerated Reader is a program in which students read books and take a comprehension test when they finish. We competed against 36 other Lutheran schools in this challenge. As a school, Immanuel finished in 18<sup>th</sup> place! Even though kindergarteners couldn't be a part of this challenge, that didn't stop them from reading too. As a class they read over 300 books! Awesome reading, everyone!

### Spaghetti Dinner to Kick off Race for Education—May 9th, 4-6:30pm in the Gym

\$10 Advance Tickets (\$40 per family unit), 4 & Under FREE      \$12 at the door

On Friday, May 10, 2024, Immanuel Lutheran School will be having our **9th Annual Race for Education**. **Funds raised will be used to address technology needs at Immanuel Lutheran School.**

The K through 8th Grade will be walking or jogging around the school perimeter during a one hour period. All donations are greatly appreciated. We would like to thank you for helping us improve our technology needs.

### Totals raised from recent events:

**“Envelopes of Hope” (as of March 26<sup>th</sup>) - \$1,732** towards tuition assistance-If all envelopes are filled by April 1, Pastor will wear Green Bay Packer gear the first weekend in April. (If you would like to “Keep Pastor In Purple,” and more donations are received than the “Envelopes of Hope,” Pastor will get to wear his Viking gear. \$600 raised to date for “Keep Pastor in Purple.”)

**Staff/Teacher Lenten meal- \$244** which was put towards “Envelopes of Hope” for Tuition Assistance

**Stuffed animal collection-** we collected 35 new stuffed animals during Lutheran Schools Week to be delivered to Child Life (Pediatrics) and the police department

**Door Decorating contest-** 4K- \$82.50      Kindergarten- \$31.00      1<sup>st</sup>- \$313.50  
2<sup>nd</sup>- \$37.00      3<sup>rd</sup>- \$33.00      4<sup>th</sup>- \$30.00      5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>- \$111.00      7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>- \$80.00

**Carnival Silent Auction- \$10,338** Ticket sales for Carnival Games are still being tallied.

We sincerely thank you for all the support and prayers you give to our school and events.

We wish you a very blessed Easter! He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! ~Jill Helgersen

"I would like to thank the many members of Immanuel Church and School for your prayers, cards and phone calls over the past six months or so. Knowing that my church family held me up in prayer was very heart warming. I have moved to South Dakota recently to be closer to my daughter and her family but will still be a member at Immanuel. I will certainly miss everyone but know that you are in my thoughts and prayers daily. I will miss your visits, phone calls and hugs. Thank you again for your kindnesses and may God continue to bless you abundantly." Kathy Oelrich

Dates and Times have now been set for our partnership with Concordia Chicago in improving and growing our service and ministry to senior adults. It's known as SAM. Its focus is on helping adults to live fully as we grow older. It is designed to address some of the complex factors affecting aging and how a variety of Christian practices can enrich the faith of and foster the well-being and emotional resilience among older persons. Topics will include loneliness and isolation, caregiving, mental health, and end-of-life planning.

There is no cost, and anyone is welcome to participate. For those who can't gather with those who choose to participate in person, there may be the option of participating virtually.

There will be six 60–90 minute sessions, Thursdays, beginning at 6pm on these dates: April 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>. In-person sessions will be held at Immanuel, 604 Chestnut Ave S, Marshfield. Call 715-384-5121 for more information.

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL & CHILD CARE CENTER**

604 South Chestnut Avenue, Marshfield, WI Phone (715) 384-5121

Website: [Immanuelmarshfield.org](http://Immanuelmarshfield.org)

Email: [info@immanuelmarshfield.org](mailto:info@immanuelmarshfield.org)

**Office Hours:** 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Rejoice** is published by Immanuel Lutheran Church, Marshfield, WI to inform the congregation of upcoming events as well as to promote Christian love, fellowship and understanding.

**PASTORAL STAFF:**

Rev. Chris A. Schwanz—Pastor

Rev. Donn Radde—Visitation Pastor

**SCHOOL FACULTY:**

Jill Helgersen, Principal

Stephanie Wolf—7/8 Homeroom,

English & Literature, 5/6 Social Studies

Jen Schifeline—7/8 Social Studies & Science, 5/6 Science

Rev. Chris Schwanz—7/8 Catechism

Renee Hammond—Grades 5—6, 7/8 Math

Brenda Kuhnau—Grade 4

Heidi Foemmel—Grade 3

Jill Helgersen—Grade 2 Morning

Sara Vechinski—Grade 2 afternoon

Beth Hollatz—Grade 1

Emily Marino—Kindergarten

Christina Berger—Elementary Aide

Renee Griepentrog—4K

Jan Simonson—School Music

Nicholas Olsen—Physical Education

Erica Borgo—Art

Jordyn Helgersen—Computer, Elementary Aide

Thomas Rose—Athletic Director

Dennis Wibben—Director, Nutrition Services

**CHILD CARE STAFF:**

Brooke Draves, Child Care Supervisor

Sheena Brunzo

Jenny Flugel

Jordyn Helgersen

Jeanine Kaszuba

Caitlyn Muraski

Miranda Ruiz

**CUSTODIAL STAFF:**

Terry Fischer

Dan Langteau

**OFFICE STAFF:**

Cathy Muraski—Business Manager

Heidi Schwanz—Administrative Assistant

**Deaths**

James "Jim" R. Bauman, age 84, of Mosinee, passed away on Friday, February 16, 2024. Funeral services were held at 11am on Friday, March 1, 2024 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Marshfield. Burial followed in Hillside Cemetery with military honors conducted by American Legion Post 54 of Marshfield. Rev. Mark Krueger officiated. Life Tributes Funeral Home assisted the family.

**Quilting for Missions**

The beautiful quilts made by Immanuel Quilters were displayed in the sanctuary on Palm Sunday and Easter weekends. What a beautiful sight!

This group of 16 ladies made 91 quilts for missions through Orphan Grain Train, 78 quilts have been given to Veterans, 86 Doll Quilts were sent in Operation Christmas Child boxes. That's 255 quilts! Thank you, ladies, for your good work!

Quilting meets on Wednesday mornings from 8-noon. We break for coffee and conversation at 10am. If you would like to help tie or stitch quilts for missions, please join us!

**Adult Bible Study will be Mondays and Wednesdays at 1pm** The topic will be the same each week on both days. The two opportunities are to make room for our growing group! Come and learn with us!

**Youth Ministry at Immanuel**

Sunday School K - 6th grade - 10am  
Catechism Wednesday - 6:30pm.  
High School Youth Wednesday - 7:30pm.  
Simple Truth Youth Praiseband,  
5th Grade and up, Sunday - 10:15am.

**Confirmation**

April 24 @ 6:30pm Confirmation Stole making and Gown Fitting  
May 1 @ 6:15pm Confirmation Photos, rehearsal, faith statements, cake and ice cream reception  
May 5 @ 9am Confirmation of Faith

**Lutheran Women in Mission**

Immanuel Lutheran Women in Mission are hosting a Spring Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, April 17th, 11am-1pm. The cost is \$9 at the door. If you would like to bring a food item, please see the sign up board in the narthex. If you are able to help with set up, work the day of the event or help with clean up, please sign up!

Please mark your calendar for our Rummage Sale on June 6 & 7. As you gather things to donate, please keep in mind, due to space limitations, drop off will be after school ends in May. These times will be communicated in the bulletin and the May REJOICE!

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday evening, April 9th at 6:30pm. The evening begins with a devotion and Bible Study, followed by our meeting and fellowship. Please plan to attend and remember, guests and visitors are always welcome.

**Chapel Communion**

April 18 at 1:30pm will be our next Chapel Communion service. This service is open to anyone! It is especially convenient for those not able to join us for weekend worship or who desire a small group setting for worship.

**Help for the Homeless Hygiene Drive**

Thank you so much for your contributions to the Hygiene for the Homeless drive. Again you have gone above and beyond. I am so proud to belong to such a generous, caring church family. God bless you all!

Julie MacDonald

**Thank You**

Thank you to all who thought of me with prayers, visits, cards, gifts, phone calls, and/or well wishes while I was on the mend these past 2 months. Our gracious God answers prayers and has granted me many blessings. Heartfelt thanks to Him and all of you! Donna Zwicke

**Immanuel Worship Broadcast: YouTube during Worship Service times.  
Connect via the Immanuel Website.**

View Sunday worship services on Charter/Spectrum Cable Digital 989:  
Thursday 2pm Sunday 4pm

**Mission Statement**

**"Immanuel Lutheran Church, School and Child Care Center:**  
Reaching out to all people, teaching and sharing God's gift of Jesus Christ, with the values of empowering, equipping and encouraging all the saints."

Nominations have opened for the upcoming 2024-2026 officers and boards. During the upcoming Annual Voter's meeting, we will be holding elections for the following positions: President of the Congregation (1), Secretary of the Congregation (1), Board of Administration (3), Board of Education (3), and Board of Elders (3).

If you would like to nominate someone for an office/board, or you have an interest in running for one of the open positions, please contact Jeremiah (JJ) Jensen, Glen Buth, Laura Abel, Joy Wirtz, or the church office. At this time, the nominations committee will also be reaching out to members of the congregation to see if they would consider running for selected offices/boards. Please prayerfully consider running for one of these positions. "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Hebrews 13:16. Jeremiah Jensen, Congregational President.

### Current Elected Board Members-

JJ Jensen—President, Steve Koran —Vice President, Becca Ayer—Secretary

Board of Education: Jolene Albert, Hannah Barth, Kim Bernarde, Daniel Craft, Amanda Sessions

Board of Elders: Glen Buth, Corey Kuhnau, Brian Mortvedt, Dave Rogers, Doug Wirtz

Board of Administration: Laura Abel, Jake Bernarde, Al Merkel, Tom Schafer, Joe Vechinski

## **SPECIAL OFFERINGS RECEIVED February 12, 2024—March 18, 2024:**

*(Please note on offering envelope which project you choose to sponsor)*

### **PORTALS OF PRAYER**

Ursula Rhodes  
Doreen Fuller  
Len Kleinschmidt

### **HEATING & BUILDING UPDATES**

*Doug & Joy Wirtz*  
Vickie Dux  
Robert & Beverly Chase

### **JOY PRAISEBAND**

In honor of Rich & Laura Abel  
Janet Holler  
Harriet Brandt

### **LIGHTING PROJECT**

Len Kleinschmidt

### **BAPTISM FAITH CHEST**

In honor of Gladys Thimmesch  
By her family

### **SANCTUARY PIANO**

Jeremiah & Shana Jensen  
Harriet Brandt  
John & Linda Hart  
Kyle & Tania Davis  
Darwin & Renee Anding  
Faith Steinwagner  
Doug & Joy Wirtz  
Larry & Sue Pribbernow  
James & Karen Swenson  
John & Jan Simonson

### **IMMANUEL LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

#### **GYM WINDOWS**

Darwin & Renee Anding  
Harriet Brandt  
Don & Dianne Borgen  
Phil & Rhonda Messerschmidt  
Larry & Sue Pribbernow  
Jeremiah & Shana Jensen  
Tim & Jacki Krause

### **HELP US GROW THROUGH E-GIVING**

Giving online is fast, easy and secure. You can set up recurring payments.

Visit our website at: <https://secure.myvanco.com/YQQW>

1. Or scan QR code with your smart phone
2. Locate the Give Online button.
3. Donate!





*Immanuel Lutheran  
Church, Marshfield*

*Spring Luncheon*

*Wednesday, April 17, 2024*

*11:00am - 1:00pm*

*In the Church Fellowship Hall*

*\$9.00 at the door*

*Sponsored by: Immanuel Lutheran Women In Mission*

*Immanuel Lutheran Church  
604 S Chestnut Ave, Marshfield*

*715-384-5121*