

Immanuel Lutheran Church

March 2021

Messenger



Immanuel Lutheran Church
Called, Empowered, and Sent by God to Live, Love, and Learn God's Word
Nuestra Declaración De Misión
Somos llamados, autorizados, y enviados por Dios para vivir, amar, y aprender la Palabra de Dios
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Pastor Leslie's Message

Maybe, like me, you are poking your head outside to see what little flowers are beginning to bloom in your grass. The parsonage yard is full of snowdrops and a few violets in the grass—sure signs of brighter days. As we begin our Lenten journey it is good that we see the light breaking through the darkness, and as our days begin to lengthen it is somehow easier to make that journey to the cross with Jesus.

This Lent our Vespers on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 via Zoom are a time of hearing the ways in which God matters in our lives when members of our Council give their faith stories. It will be meaningful and grace filled and I look forward to the ministry of witnessing the Gospel in these times of sharing. God is with each of us as we linger in the Psalms this Lent. Psalms, 19, 107, 51, and 31 will be our weekly focus during Vespers. We will read the Psalm, have a time of silent meditation on the Psalm and then read it responsively.

I encourage you to live with a Psalm during the week as well. Let it be yours for your morning devotions, or nightly Bible reading. Martin Luther writes: “The Psalter ought to be a dear and beloved book, if only because it promises Christ’s death and resurrection so clearly and so depicts His kingdom and the condition and nature of all Christendom that we may call it a little Bible. Most beautifully and briefly it embraces everything in the entire Bible; it is made into a fine enchiridion, or handbook. Therefore it seems to me that the Holy Spirit wanted to take the trouble of compiling a short Bible and a book of examples of all Christendom or of all saints with this purpose in mind that whoever could not read the whole Bible would here have practically an entire summary of it, comprised in one booklet. The Psalter is the book for all saints, and everyone, whatever his (sic) situation may be, finds psalms and words in it that fit his (sic) situation and apply to his (sic) case so exactly that it seems they were put in this way only for his (sic) sake...”

Luther captures the importance of the Psalms in his writing. The Psalms lift us when we need spiritual healing, they ground us when we feel scattered or lost. The Psalms fill us when we need the calm reassurance of the Holy Spirit and they ease us when the day has been full of despair.

During this time of Lent, in the midst of COVID and all of its difficulties, I encourage you to sink into the Psalms. Read them, study them, and live with them. The four Psalms that we will be using for Lent are just enough for us to really explore the true essence of what Luther wrote. May this “little Bible” be for you a meaningful journey during this time of Lent, and may you be strengthened for the journey in peace.

Pastor Leslie

UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:

Sunday Worship

Begins at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. To connect to Worship services on Zoom, go to www.immanuellutheraneverson.com click on Worship and scroll down to the Zoom hyperlink.

Adult Forum

“Aging in the Grace of God” Part 2 will be our focus for March. Topics will include: our own mortality, life’s transitions and God’s steadfastness, forgiveness and reconciliation, telling our faith story, and our friendship with God. All are welcome to this attend Adult Forum immediately following 9:30 a.m. Zoom worship.

Drive-by Palms for Palm Sunday on Saturday, March 27th

Palms will be available from 1:00-2:00 p.m. on **Saturday, March 27th** near the Fellowship Hall door. Simply drive to the door and Pastor Leslie will give you your palms. If you prefer, you can pick up your palms any time after 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, in the Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday Lenten Services - March 3, 10, 17, and 24 at 6:30 on Zoom



HOLY WEEK

April 1 - Maundy Thursday

April 2 - Good Friday

April 4 - Easter

March Birthdays

3/5 Darlene Bayer
3/6 Aaron Workman Smith
3/6 Rebecca Andrews
3/7 Dave Wagner
3/14 Charley Short
3/20 Karen Harkness
3/20 Martha Sirguy
3/21 Belia Estrada
3/21 Sheila Gassman
3/22 BobENZler
3/24 Liza Okan
3/25 Leah Young
3/27 Monica Bruland
3/31 Linda Anderson

March Anniversaries

3/18 Steve & Irene Higbee



March Scripture Readings

March 7 - 3 Lent

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

I Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

March 14 - 4 Lent

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

March 21 - 5 Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12 or Psalm 119:9-16

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

March 28 - Passion/Palm Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Mark 14:1 — 15:47 or Mark 15:1-39[40-47]

“The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament gives witness to God’s handiwork”

- Psalm 19:1

Thank you, Women of Immanuel, for sending out the sweet Valentine cards! It was really special to receive that in the mail.

Women of Immanuel News

WOI’s Ladies’ Walk and Talk starts Monday, April 5, at 10:00 a.m. We will meet at the new Cordata Park, 4510 Cordata Pkwy, across from the Cordata Peace Health Clinic in Bellingham. All ladies are invited. The trail is flat; you can go at your own pace and rest when needed. Wear your mask and bring water and something to snack on. If you have any questions, contact Sue Ohlswager 360-966-7840.

The **Women of Immanuel** will be handing out cinnamon rolls after Easter Sunday service. This will only happen if the service is able to happen (if the weather cooperates and we can have it outside in the church cemetery). Free will donations will be accepted.

The WOI are tentatively planning on a **Strawberry Shortcake “drive-by” on Sunday June 20th** after worship for church members. Free will donations will be accepted.

Mark Your Calendars! The WOI Rummage Sale is August 28. Please keep us in mind while doing your spring cleaning and save your give away items for this

event. The Rummage sale will be WOI’s only fundraiser this year. Funds raised will help purchase quilting supplies and monetarily help people in need.

Thank you, Dawn Durand and Sue Ohlswager, for doing such a great job updating our sign every few weeks!



Bishop's Message

March 2021



This is a picture of a calendar I have on my desk. The date on it is, "March 10, 2020. Yes, I am not making a mistake, the year on this calendar is 2020. Last year, when I turned the page on this calendar, I had no idea that this date would mark the last time I had a "normal" day in my office – with my staff and I talking, sitting at our desks, crowded together, laughing, doing business – not thinking at all of masks or physically distancing or washing hands (well, hopefully we were washing our hands!).

I have kept this calendar on March 10, 2020 as a snapshot of when life changed to a new reality. Like many of you, I never dreamed that one year later we would all be planning our second Easter of COVID or having second birthdays under these strange circumstances or still not knowing for sure when we might gather together safely.

I did not anticipate the suffering so many people have undergone. The hundreds of thousands of people who have died. So many who are still suffering from the ravages of COVID. The impact of this virus has been brutal for millions of people.

While I consider myself a patient person, truth be told, I am becoming impatient. I am ready to be done with this pandemic. I am ready for the pain and anxiety of this disease to be over. I am ready for the loss of life and health of so many to stop. I am ready for this underlying feeling of anxiety and fear to end. And you? My guess is you are feeling some of the same things.

But, as we hear in many of the psalms, we don't stop at despair. As people who believe in resurrection, we don't stop at death. In this Lenten season as we move towards Easter, we proclaim that we are a people of hope, too. As I read in my devotions this morning from Psalm 147: "The Lord heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Through community with one another, through helping those who are marginalized, through coming together in prayer and song and worship, we are healing the brokenhearted and binding up wounds.

So, let me ask you, even as we wait, what are you looking forward to? Truly, what is bringing you hope right now? What are some things that you have learned and discovered during this pandemic that you want to take forward? We know that God works through all things – how do you see God working in your life and in the life of this nation and world?

I would love to hear from you where you see God's Holy Spirit – in your congregation, in your home, in your workplace, in the world. Where are you finding hope? Where are you finding resurrection joy? You are welcome to email me at bishop@lutheransnw.org. I would love to hear from you.

In this Lenten season (a season that sometimes feels like it began last March and is still happening) we trust that we are walking the way of the Lord. God's hand is guiding us. God's love is surrounding us. And God brings us hope.

May you feel God's grace through Jesus in these days. And may we soon gather in-person again. Stay safe. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Get a vaccine when you are eligible. And know that we are church together, even when we are physically separated.

In the Hope of Christ,

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee