

# IMMANUEL'S INSIGHTS APRIL 2020

## Immanuel Lutheran Church Cancels Public Gatherings

Immanuel Lutheran Church has postponed all public gatherings for the next two months (March 16 through May 15). We encourage all our members to follow the advice of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, not just for our own sakes, but especially for the sake of the vulnerable members of our community.

We will be providing worship services on our website, on our Facebook page, and on our local TV (FMCTC and HMU). We plan to keep you updated by other means also. Possibilities include a phone tree and additional mailings.

Worship services, Sunday School, Women's groups, Choir, Bells, confirmation classes, LYO, Kid's Club, and Bible studies are all postponed. We will continue to monitor the situation and resume our regular schedule of worship, fellowship, education, and service when this pandemic emergency is over.

You can find our website @ [harlanimmanuel.org](http://harlanimmanuel.org).

We are on Facebook @ <https://www.facebook.com/ilcharlan/?ref=hl>

## Volunteers needed

The Harlan Community School District has announced that they will be launching a Feeding Program while schools are closed. They hope to have the program up and running within the next few days.

The plan will be to provide 2 meals a day – breakfast and lunch.

The district is hoping that a large portion of the children participating will receive their meals via home delivery. They need volunteers/assistance to help make this happen. They are asking the following:

Can you, or do you know of an able-bodied adult who may be able to assist with the meal delivery?

For those able to volunteer, how many large coolers would they be able to fit into their vehicle with meals inside?

For businesses – if you have hot boxes or coolers available, would you be able to loan them to the school district to help with the deliveries?

They would of course need individuals' names and a cell phone number they can use to text volunteers.

If you can assist with this program – please contact Ellen Walsh-Rosmann:

[Ellen.walshrosmann@hcsdcyclones.com](mailto:Ellen.walshrosmann@hcsdcyclones.com)



Dear Friends in Christ,

Jesus promised: "Where two or three gather in my name, there I am in the midst of them." (Matthew 18) I've always heard that promise as Jesus' encouragement when the crowd for worship isn't what I had hoped. But what if Jesus was actually expressing his preference to work in small groups? The crowds were fickle. "Hosanna" on Sunday was followed by "Crucify" on Friday. I don't think Jesus wanted to be a mega-church pastor. Mega-churches are good at producing fans but not so good at producing followers. The most effective mega-churches are actually clusters of small groups.

Historically, anything over a hundred people in worship is a mega-church. Most churches in the history of the Christian movement have been small groups of Jesus followers, often gathered in houses or other private locations.

So now the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised us to shut down all gatherings over 50 people for 2 months. People over the age of 60 have been advised to avoid any gatherings. That pretty well means that most U.S. churches should shut down their public worship gatherings until well after Easter Sunday.

But Church isn't just what happens in gatherings in church buildings. Church happens whenever and wherever people gather in Jesus' name around his Word. Church happens whenever anyone steps out of their routine to follow Jesus by serving others.

I had some great plans for Holy Week and Easter. We were going to have the most outstanding Good Friday drama presentation. Many of those plans are postponed for another year. At our congregation we will not be gathering in large public gatherings for the next two months. Like many churches, we will offer worship leadership by streaming on the internet and by other means.

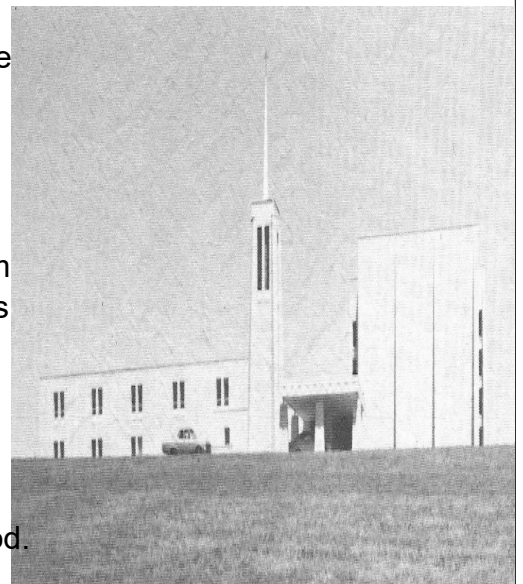
Easter won't be the same. But maybe in some ways this will be good for us. I have always envied Judaism at Passover. Their holiest day is celebrated not in large public gatherings but intimately in small groups around family tables. So this year, Christians will be celebrating Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter in our homes. Many may be connecting by internet or TV. Others will be using recorded resources. Others will use written resources. Others will find their own way. And Jesus will be there.

But don't do this alone. The priesthood of all believers means that we need each other. Find someone who can join with you in worship. Give each other Communion on Holy Thursday and Easter. Be the Body of Christ for each other.

Christians have faced plagues and pandemics before. They have two words of encouragement for us. First, don't run away from your neighbors in need. Don't give in to panic. During the panic and problems of a pandemic we have our best opportunities to serve our neighbors. If you don't know your neighbors, get to know them. Tell them to call you if they need anything. Tell them you are praying for them. Listen to them as they share their fears and frustrations. As we hunker down to wait out the virus, let's not forget our neighbors around us.

Secondly, don't put God to the test. Follow the advice of public health authorities. Take precautions. Avoid situations that are risky. Don't be in denial. There is potential for great harm here. But because Jesus is with us, there is also potential for great good.

Yours in Christ, *Phil Nielsen*





**Happy Birthday to the following:**

Marg Olson who will be 90 on April 6.  
 Marvel Jacobsen who will be 85 on April 6.  
 Joyce Nielsen who will be 89 on April 10.  
 Lois Troll who will be 87 on April 11.  
 Jeanette Kroger who will be 81 on April 16.  
 Judy Juhler who will be 85 on April 23.  
 Emmert Andersen who will be 82 on April 27.

**EMAIL CONTACTS**

We have set up a mass email account to give you the latest information from Immanuel. If you have not received an email from us, we may not have an active email address for you. Please email us at [ilc@fmctc.com](mailto:ilc@fmctc.com) or call the church office at 755-5207 to update your membership file contact information.

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

We will be posting worship services on our website and our Facebook page. We hope to have them ready for viewing at the regular service times. Sunday services will also be broadcast at our usual times on FMCTC and HMU. Here is the schedule of services:

March 18 (Wednesday) is our 3<sup>rd</sup> midweek Lenten service focusing on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The message will be "The Prodigal God: In the Pig Sty". Why does life stink sometimes?

March 22 (Sunday) is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent. The message will be "Jesus and a Blind Man". Again the question of suffering will be addressed.

March 25 (Wednesday) is our 4<sup>th</sup> midweek Lenten service focusing on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The message will be "The Prodigal God: He Runs". How does God save us?

March 29 (Sunday) is the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent. The message will be "Jesus and a Dead Friend". What do we do with our grief?

April 1 (Wednesday) is our final midweek Lenten service. The message will be "The Prodigal God: the Elder Brother."

April 5 (Sunday) is Palm Sunday and the Sunday of the Passion. Perhaps we will be able to live stream this service on our Facebook page by this time.

April 9 (Thursday) is Maundy Thursday when we remember the Last Supper and the New Commandment of Jesus. Again, we hope to live stream this service at 7 p.m. We invite you to join us on our Facebook page. You are welcome to prepare some bread and wine or grape juice to join in Holy Communion that night.

April 10 (Friday) is Good Friday. We will have a meditation on the cross at 7 p.m.

April 12 (Sunday) is Easter Sunday. We will have a service available. But there is also the possibility that we will offer an outdoor Sunrise Service that day where people bring their own lawnchairs and we sit out on the lawn at Immanuel for a brief Easter worship service. We will have more information later.

April 19 and 26 (Sunday) we will continue to offer services online and on TV.



**ON OUR PRAYER LIST:** Arlene Warner, Marian Riessen, Brody Nelson, Jon Burmeister, Shawn Havick, Annette Anderson, Nancy Gessmann, Marlys Moore, Bill Hosack, Clarice Andersen, Connie Benson, Robert Glenn (father of Sharon Kroger), Jessica Beeton (great-niece of Kathy Voge), Scott Bergemann (father of Hope Chipman) and Curt Olson (son of Sue Olson).

**Please Pray for:**



**COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY March 10, 2020—7 pm**

The Immanuel Church Council met March 10 with 9 of 14 members present. Becky Chipman shared devotions about waiting, trusting, and hoping from Psalm 27. John Taggs will lead devotions in April.

Treasurer reported February income of \$20,362.78 and expenses of \$20,097.94. General fund at \$30,109. Savings Account stands at \$15,104.

**Outreach:** We have donated 418 pounds of product to the Shelby County Food Pantry so far this year which is already 50% of 2019's record amount. Good job! Our April Mission Partners are Lutheran Asian Ministry which has recently paid to get some pastors out of jail and LCMC Disaster Assistance Fund (in response to the TN storms).

**Worship:** Council discussed contingency plans for the coronavirus epidemic. We will suspend handshaking, passing offering plates, and take other measures to insure safety of our members. Council discussed how we will respond if the Shelby County Public Health recommends us to cancel public gatherings. We will cancel services but continue to broadcast on HMU and FMCTC and on our website.

We received a new bid for the upgrade to our camera system. Because the cost was significantly higher, we will seek a second bid.

**Fellowship:** A young adult fine dining event was held in February. Attendance included 5 new members and 5 prospective members.

**Property:** Mower will be serviced. We will check on the availability of mowing volunteers.

**CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS:** Any member of ILC who will be attending either Riverside or Ingham-Okoboji camps this summer is eligible for financial assistance from WOW/ILCW. Applications are available in the church office for \$100 per child for individual campers or up to \$200 for a family with 2 or more children. Applications are due by May 1, 2020 and money will be paid directly to the camp.

FMCTC	Channel # 48	Wednesday	4:00 P.M.
HMU	Channel # 15	Mon. & Wed.	6:00 P.M.

**WORSHIP & GIVING**

	<u>Attendance</u>					<u>General</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Feb. 26</b>					126			= \$ 1,163.00
<b>Feb. 29-Mar. 1</b>	38	+	135	=	173	\$ 5,068.00	\$ 75.00	= \$ 5,143.00
<b>Mar. 4</b>					90			= \$ 822.00
<b>Mar. 7/8</b>	36	+	146	=	182	\$ 3,092.00	\$ 25.00	= \$ 3,117.00
<b>Mar. 11</b>					70			= \$ 723.00
<b>Mar. 14/15</b>	17	+	92	=	109	\$ 4,381.00	\$	= \$ 4,381.00



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**WOMEN OF THE WORD EXEC BOARD****March 11, 2020**

The WOW Executive Board met in the narthex Wed. March 11 with Sandy Nelsen, Kathy Block, Sharon Daberkow, Myrna Havick, Sally Nairn present and Janet Johannsen via phone. Sandy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** February minutes were reviewed. Sharon motioned and Sally seconded for approval. Ayes all.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Kathy reported no receipts or bills so balance remains at \$2195.81.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Thank You received from Salem Home in Elk Horn for our \$500 donation which went to their equipment fund. They expressed appreciation for our generosity and faith in missions. Thank You on bulletin board in the narthex.

**HOSPITALITY:** Forty-seven cards have been sent since Jan 1: Get Well 7, Sympathy 4, Birthday 6, Valentines 30.

**COMMUNITY:** Sharon was going to check with Elm Crest if it was still planning on WOW hosting the birthday party tomorrow afternoon. Salem Home in Elk Horn has closed doors to visitors because of the Coronavirus. If doors still open at Elm Crest, 4 cakes will be taken to the party.

**MISSION QUILTS:** Three quilts have been made. One Care/Concern quilt given to Louie Troll. Quilters will meet the last Monday in March.

**OLD BUSINESS:** *Lenten Supper:* Tonight. Thank You to everyone for contributions of food and working. Special Thank You to Elaine and Jill for organizing the Baked Potato Bar.

**NEW BUSINESS:** *Easter Lilies:* Maggie is in charge of lily sale which will be Sunday Mar 22, Wed Mar 25 and Sat/Sun Mar 28/29. They can also be purchased at the church office. Payment due at the time of ordering. \$10 for each lily.

Sally Nairn expressed need for new white cloth to be used on the wooden Easter cross. It's been patched and looking rough. Suggestion was to use an old white tablecloth if any are still available. Sally will be looking into this.

**Camp Applications:** Two camp assistance apps have been received. Camp Info will be included in the Insights Newsletter and also bulletins. **Deadline for apps is May 1.**

**Harvest Bazaar:** October 14 date has been set. Committees will be formed in upcoming months. Meeting adjourned at 9:20.

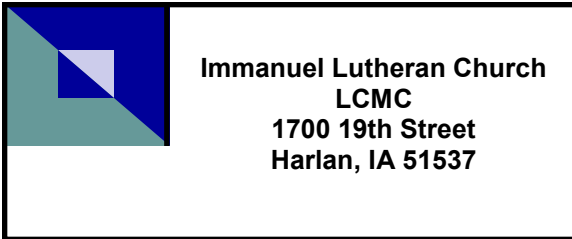
**WOW GATHERING**

**Women of the Word** met in the Fellowship Hall with 13 attending. Sharon D served lunch. Judy O shared humor "you might be a Lutheran IF" and an Ole story. Sandy had program on **Friendship.** Proverbs 27:9 "A sweet friendship refreshes the soul." Book from the church library, "The Gift of Friendship" has many stories and things to think about when finding friends. Being involved in WOW, bible study, Sunday School and other groups can create many lasting friendships. Friends are one of God's greatest gifts. Good friend traits are being honest, understanding, supportive, trusting and respectful. We all have the same friend and that is Jesus. Group sang "What a Friend We Have In Jesus" and ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting is April 8. Maggie Hatcher will have the program. Janet J will serve refreshments.

Janet Johannsen, Secretary

Upcoming Dates: April 12, Easter; May 1 Camp Application Deadline; Oct 14 Harvest Bazaar



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Pastor Phil's Cell Number: 712-579-2098  
Home Number: 712-766-3178  
E-mail: [peacephillip@gmail.com](mailto:peacephillip@gmail.com)  
[www.harlanimmanuel.org](http://www.harlanimmanuel.org)

**Staff:**

Pastor Phil Nielsen  
Music Director: Heidi Thies  
Office Manager: Joan Wehr  
Custodian: Ed Wehr