

NEWSLETTER  
THE PRESENCE

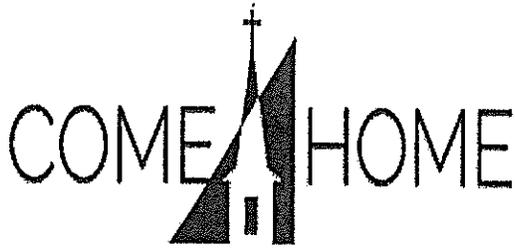


**Our Mission Statement**

*"We teach, proclaim and live Christ in all things."*

*Where two or three come together in my name there am I with them. Matthew 18:20*

Immanuel Lutheran Church – 351 Wilson Street – Alpena, Michigan 49707 – Ph: 989-354-3443  
Website: [immanuelalpena.org](http://immanuelalpena.org)



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

### CHURCH CONTACTS

Phone: 989-354-3443

Fax: 989-354-0122

Secretary – Janel Muszynski Ext. 10

Secretary - Kathy Nowak Ext. 11

**Email:** [office@immanuelalpena.org](mailto:office@immanuelalpena.org)

#### Senior Pastor

Rev. James D. Erickson

Phone ext. 16

**Email:** [ericksonj@immanuelalpena.org](mailto:ericksonj@immanuelalpena.org)

#### Deacon:

James T. Wolf

**Email:** [wolfj@immanuelalpena.org](mailto:wolfj@immanuelalpena.org)

### SCHOOL CONTACTS

Phone: 989-354-4805

Fax: 989-358-1102

**Principal:** Rev. Joshua Schultz Ext. 23

**Email:** [schultzjm@immanuelalpena.org](mailto:schultzjm@immanuelalpena.org)

**Administrative Assistant –**

Kelsey MacNeill Ext. 13

**Email:** [school@immanuelalpena.org](mailto:school@immanuelalpena.org)

Congregation President: Bob Lang

Congregation V President:

Congregation Secretary: Maddison Wangelin

Congregation Treasurer: Kim LaBrecque

## Worship Services

Saturday at 6:30 pm

Sunday at 8:00am & 10:30am

*(live on Facebook at 10:30am)*

WBKB-TV 7:30am Ch: 12

10:00am Ch: 10

## Membership Changes

### Transfers In/Out:

None in February

### Deaths:

None in February



## Office News

Bulletin submission deadline

3:00pm Tuesday

Newsletter submission deadline

The 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.



## ANNIVERSARIES-CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OR MORE



*Fred & Phyllis Tippman ~ 59Yrs, March 31*

# We're Looking For Help

- Mercy and Care Committee  
Volunteers Contact: Anne Lewandowski 989 590-7174 or Karen Nowicki-Compeau 989 657-4149
- Immanuel Lutheran Social Ministry is looking for board members Contact: Dawn McDonald 989-354-8541
- Immanuel Lutheran School kitchen volunteers contact School 989-354-4805
- Weekly Altar Flower offerings has many spots open see signup sheet on Kiosk or contact Kathy Nowak at 989-657-9646. If you would like to purchase flowers.
- Looking for Altar Guild helpers to set up communion. Contact Tina at 989-595-3119

Please mark your calendar for our School Fundraiser Gala on Friday, September 25, 2026, at the APLEX. More details coming soon!



**SAVE THE DATE!**

See weekly bulletin/google calendar or inquire at church office for details

## MONDAY:

- ❖ 7-8am Early Bird Bible Study  
Adult Ed. Room
- ❖ 9:30am Social Ministry Meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month)  
5:00pm Sunday School Teacher training (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month)
- ❖ 6-7:10pm Adult Inquirer's Class in Adult Ed.
- ❖ 6pm Women's Bible Study in Youth Room (Check google calendar for changes)

## TUESDAY:

- ❖ 8:00am Quilters Guild meets  
In fellowship room
- ❖ 6:00pm Parish Boards Meeting (1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the Month)
- ❖ 6:00pm Parish Planning Council (2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month)
- ❖ 6:00pm Voters Meetings (Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, April 28<sup>th</sup>, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>, Dec 1<sup>st</sup>)

## WEDNESDAY:

- ❖ 8am Chapel in Sanctuary
- ❖ 6:30-7:30pm Conf. Class in Adult Ed./Youth Rm (5:30PM During Lenten & Advent Services)

## THURSDAY:

- ❖ 8:00am Quilters
- ❖ 11:00am Prayer Circle – Library
- ❖ 2:00pm Afternoon Bible Study-  
Adult Education Room
- ❖ 6:00pm Jr./Sr. High Youth Group in Youth room
- ❖ 6:00pm Adult Choir – Sanctuary
- ❖ 6-6:30pm Close the Back Door in Adult Ed.
- ❖ 7pm AI-Anon in Adult Ed.

## SATURDAY:

- ❖ 7:30am Men's Prayer Breakfast (2<sup>nd</sup> Sat of month No July/No August)

## SUNDAY:

- ❖ 9:15am Youth Sunday School/Adult Bible Study in Fellowship Room
- ❖ 11:30am Bell Choir Practice (following 10:30am Service)



## A Mercy & Care Committee

January started out slow for assisting individuals in need but picked up the last part of the month. Your generous donations of food and money were able to assist one individual to prevent shut off of their heat and to a homeless individual to purchase a bus ticket (with assistance of one other church) to get them to their family down south. Another two families were assisted with food from our pantry. God bless your continued generosity. If anyone is interested in assisting with the Social Ministry committee, please reach out to Dawn McDonald at 989-354-8541.

Is a Ministry that has been formed within our church family dedicated to offering compassionate care and support for members of our congregation.

Our ministry seeks to provide Christ's love with compassionate care through meaningful acts of kindness.

If you or someone you know from our congregation could utilize these services, whether it's helping with small chores, transportation needs, meals, or simply a visit from one of our volunteers, please reach out to Karen Nowicki-Compeau (989)657-4149 or Anne Lewandowski (989) 590-7174 to utilize our services.

"Therefore, be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful." Luke 6:36



Prayer Circle continues every Thursday morning at 11:00am in the Church Library.

We start with scripture followed by 30 minutes of prayer. Bring any prayer concerns that you have or just come and pray with us. We would love to pray for you or someone you care for. Please feel free to fill out a prayer request card and place it in the container marked "Prayer Requests" located in our parish welcome center.

### New from the Immanuel Evangelism Team.

"Timeless Wisdom"- is a framed Scripture reflection, perfect for gifting or displaying in your home. A minimum donation of \$10 per piece is requested, with all proceeds supporting our School Expansion Fund. Available in the Church office. Thank you for investing in the future of our Students!

### WOMEN'S MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY



#### SCHEDULE:

March 16 @ 6pm

March 23 @ 6pm

**Pre Service Hymn Sing** featuring Mike Stauffer and Sharon Jack (accompanist) in the sanctuary at **6:15pm**

March 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>



"Just For Widows" will meet at church for a

Lenten Devotion and Bible Study on our usual

**FRIDAY, MARCH 6th at**

**NOON (12 pm).** Please

bring your own lunch. Come for fellowship and sharing

God's Word. Any questions? Call Carol @ 989-

354-3758 or Janet @ 989-354-4486.

**(No gathering in April)**





Altar Guild is in need of individuals to prepare communion on the following dates:

**10:30AM Service: March 8<sup>th</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup>**

If you can help with any of these dates, please contact:

**Tina Boven at 989-595-3119**

**6<sup>TH</sup> & 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE CONFIRMATION STUDENTS** ... are reminded that throughout this Lenten season, Confirmation classes will meet from 5:30-6:15 p.m. in the adult education (6<sup>th</sup>) & youth (7<sup>th</sup>) rooms prior to the Wednesday Lenten service at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Students are reminded it is expected that you remain for the evening Lenten services following class.



**Luncheon on Sunday  
March 15<sup>th</sup> in the  
Fellowship Room.**

**(Immediately following the 10:30am service)**

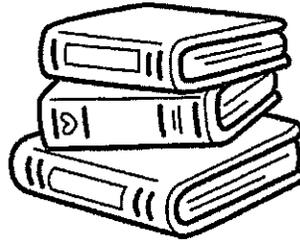
We're hosting a gathering featuring delicious BBQ pork Sliders, side dishes, and desserts-and you're invited! During this special time together, we'll be sharing important updates about our School Expansion Project, including:

- The latest progress and upcoming plans
- Exciting developments on the horizon
- Ways you can get involved as a volunteer

Everyone is welcome! Come enjoy a great meal, warm fellowship and be part of shaping the next exciting chapter in our school's growth. We look forward to seeing you there!



**March 8<sup>th</sup>:  
Set clocks ahead 1  
hour  
(Spring Forward)**



Do you love to read? Is child literacy something you find important? **Our 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher is developing an "in house" book club** for

her class to encourage reading and comprehension. She is looking for group leaders who would come in about once or twice a week for the Book Club with a small group of 2<sup>nd</sup> graders. ***If interested, please contact the school office or Pastor Schultz.*** (All volunteers must submit and pass a background check and are subject to the principal's approval).



**EASTER LILY'S ON SALE NOW**

**Help beautify our church this Easter!** Order an Easter Lily In Honor or In Memory of a loved one. **Cost \$8.00**

**Order Deadline: March 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Payment: Exact cash or check payable to Immanuel Lutheran Church**

*To place your order, stop by the church office or call 989-354-3443.*

After the 10:30am service on April 5<sup>th</sup>, you may take your lily home. Plants remaining after the 12<sup>th</sup> will be delivered to homebound members.

Interested in helping with deliveries? Please sign up in the narthex. Thank you for helping make our Easter Celebration beautiful!



*Don't let your  
Thrivent Choice*

**THRIVENT  
FINANCIAL®**

*Dollars disappear!  
You can direct your*

*dollars through Thrivent once every month- it only takes a minute and makes a big difference.*

*Need a hand? Dennis Neumann is happy to help you every step of the way!*

*Let's put those dollars to work and grow our school expansion together!*

# FIRST FRUITS GIVING: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The idea of “first fruits’ comes from Scripture. In the Old Testament, God’s people were instructed to bring the first portion of their harvest to the Lord (Exodus 23:19; Proverbs 3:9). They did not wait to see what was left over. They gave first—trusting that God would provide the rest.

For the New Testament Christian, this is not a ceremonial requirement. But the principle remains deeply spiritual and practical: **God comes first, not last.**

First fruits giving is simply this: We give to the Lord first, not from what remains.

## WHAT FIRST FRUITS GIVING IS NOT

- It is **not** a way to earn God’s favor. Christ has already secured that.
- It is **not** a legalistic rule imposed on the conscience.
- It is **not** about impressing others.

It is about faith and order—arranging our lives to reflect what we believe.

## WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE PRACTICALLY

First fruits giving is very concrete.

Instead of this:

1. Receive paycheck
2. Pay bills
3. Spend on needs and wants
4. Give whatever is left (if anything)

It looks like this:

1. Receive paycheck
2. Set aside the Lord’s portion first
3. Plan the rest of the budget around that decision

Many Christians choose a percentage (often working toward 10%) as a disciplined and measurable way to practice this. Others begin with a smaller percentage and grow over time. The key is that it is:

**Intentional**

**Proportionate**

**Regular**

**Given first**

In practical terms, that may mean:

- Setting up automatic giving the same day income is deposited
- Writing the offering check before paying other expenses
- Building your household budget around a predetermined percentage

## WHY “FIRST” MATTERS SPIRITUALLY

When we give first, we are saying: “Lord, You are my provider.”

First fruits giving trains the heart. Jesus said, “*Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*’ (Matthew 6:21). When the first portion goes to the Lord, our heart follows. First fruits giving is therefore not about compulsion—it is about grateful response. It is a spiritual discipline that reflects trust in God’s promises and supports the ministry of Word and Sacrament in our midst.



# March School News

*"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth; break forth into joyful song and sing praises!" Psalm 98:4*

Dear Immanuel Families,

March is Reading Month and this year our theme is beautifully connected to Psalm 23, the Good Shepherd, and the rolling green hills of Ireland. This is the theme of our summer VBS—"Emerald Crossing"—Throughout this month, we want our students to see reading as a gift of the Good Shepherd by which He feeds their minds and shapes their hearts.

Reading is a blessing, not only because we have the privilege of reading the Word of God, but when children read, they develop vocabulary, imagination, empathy, critical thinking, and discipline. Readers develop into strong learners! Even 15-20 minutes of reading at home each day make a measurable and lasting difference, which is why we encourage reading so much this month (and always!) individually and as a family.

This year as part of our reading challenge and Lent, you've been encouraged to explore and read the prayerbook of the Bible: the Psalms. There we hear the cries of repentance, the songs of trust, and the steady confidence that the Lord is our Shepherd. As our students grow in literacy, we want them growing in their ability to read and treasure God's Word. We want them to hear the Shepherd's voice clearly as He speaks forgiveness, life, and salvation.

All this then culminates for the Christian in the events of Holy Week, which we celebrate at the end of March. The cross and the empty tomb are the center of our Christian life and the pinnacle of our faith. As such, everything we teach and do flows from Christ's death and resurrection. Because of what Christ has done for us, our reading, our learning, our work, and our worship all have purpose and hope.

God bless your homes this month and always with quiet moments in the joy of reading, and with hearts prepared for the greatest celebration of all in Christ's victory in His death and resurrection.



## March Chapel Offerings to benefit: Hearts For Jesus

### March Birthdays

3/4	Shayne Pingel	3/14	Tessalyn Phillips	3/16	Boston Lamb
3/16	Grace Llewellyn	3/23	Nicole Hoggard		

*"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."  
2 Peter 3:18*

### Upcoming Dates

March 6 No Preschool  
Enrichment Friday

**Sunday, March 15**  
1st—8th Grade Choir  
@10:30 am Church Service

**Tuesday, March 17**  
PTLS Meeting

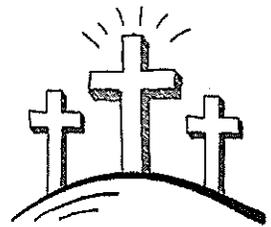
**Thursday, March 26**  
Early Release @ 11am  
P/T Conferences through 7pm

**Friday, March 27**  
No School - Half Day for Staff  
(Professional Development)  
End of Third Grade Period

**Monday, March 30**  
No School  
Spring Break Begins

**Monday, April 6**  
No School  
Easter Monday

**Tuesday, April 7**  
School Resumes



**Save the Date: Vacation Bible  
School**

June 28th through July 2nd



**Sunday School (3 years – 8th grade)**  
meets every Sunday at 9am  
**Youth Group (7th grade and Up)** meets  
every Thursday at 6pm

Immanuel Lutheran Church - Usher/Service Schedule					
WK	Date / Service	Lay Minister	Head Usher	Ushers	Acolytes
1	February 28 6:30 pm	Rick Yerks	_____	Wayne Kowalski, Jerry Plohocky, Evan Kowalski, Nick Thibault	Ella Papineau & Claire Schultz
	March 1 8:00am	Brian Glennie	Art Pahlkotter	Tom Ludwig, Tom Kindt, Clay VanWagoner	Lillian Karsten
	10:30 am	Matt Stevens	Kurt Krajniak	Robert Lewandowski, Marty Sommerfeld, Brandon Neumann	Meri Stevens & Taylor Thornton
	Lenten Service-Wed. Mar. 4	12:10pm - Mark Puls	6:30pm - Matt Stevens	David Bauer, Dale Burt, Stanley Krentz, Evan Repke, Fred Sterns	6:30pm - Jackson Schaedig & Rory Cummins Owen Miller & Kenton Parris
2	March 8 6:30 pm	Dale Parris	_____	Merton Gabara, Dave Dickins, Tom Gerszewski	Mason Chrzan & Tucker Chrzan
	8:00 am	Jerry Neumann	Paul Karsten	Darwin Grabow, Tom Grubaugh, Karl Larsen, Jim Compeau	Kasidy Medina & Ella Papineau
	10:30 am	_____	6:30pm - Dale Parris	_____	6:30pm - Skylar Torsch & Tucker Chrzan
	Lenten Service-Wed. Mar. 11	12:10pm - _____	Terry Clute	Don Frank, Nolan Parris, Will Weber, Nathan Parris	Parker Werth & Jacob Birmingham
	March 15 6:30 pm	Rick Yerks	Dale Parris	Art Hoch, Doug Huling, Jim Kindt, John Male	Mason Chrzan & Tucker Chrzan
3	8:00 am	Dale Parris	_____	Jerry Neumann, Matthew Stevens, Adam Szydowski, Tom Thornton	Meri Stevens & Lauren Gohl
	10:30 am	Mark Puls	6:30pm - _____	Dale Krentz, Ken Krentz, Rick Yerks, Dave LaMaire	6:30pm - Alayna Gosselin & Taylor Thornton
	Lenten Service-Wed. Mar. 18	12:10pm - _____	_____	Adam Hardies, Justin Karsten, Jon Kindt	Josslyn Scott & Jazmin Kolonowski
	March 22 6:30 pm	Jim VanWagnen	_____	Gary Gerke, Craig Vining, Mason Donajkowski, Steve Donajkowski	Mason Chrzan & Tucker Chrzan
	8:00 am	Tom Krist	Brian Glennie	_____	Taylor Thornton & Eleanor Stevens
4	10:30 am	Jim Grulike	6:30pm - _____	Wayne Kowalski, Jerry Plohocky, Evan Kowalski, Nick Thibault	6:30pm - Spencer Nunneley & Jacob Birmingham
	Lenten Service-Wed. Mar. 25	12:10pm - _____	_____	Tom Ludwig, Tom Kindt, Clayton VanWagoner	Kenton Parris
	March 29 6:30 pm	Dale Parris	Art Pahlkotter	Robert Lewandowski, Marty Sommerfeld, Brandon Neumann	Lillian Karsten & Lauren Gohl
	8:00 am	Jerry Neumann	Kurt Krajniak	10:30 am Anne Lewandowski & Bev Hiske Elaine Pearcey & Carol Schuetz Darlene Sommerfeld & Carol Boyd Nancy Dewar & Anita Tanner Tim Trelfa & Mabel Avery	Luke Erickson & Micah Schultz
5	10:30 am	_____	8:00 am	_____	_____
	Greeter & Welcome Center	6:30 pm	8:00 am	_____	_____
	Wk 1 Feb/Mar 28 & 1	Mariene Long	Bob & Barb Raniszewski	_____	Finance: Lori Kipfmiller
	2 March 7 & 8	Kathy Nowak	Dianne Gerszewski	_____	Altar Guild: Shelley Tuuri, Wayne & Jill Kowalski, Lori Pahlkotter Mary Lang
	3 14 & 15	Deanna Brege	Joyce Bunton	_____	Flower Committee: Angie Glennie (989) 255-4652 Cindy Krentz (989) 255-4801
	4 21 & 22	Don & Marilyn Frank	Mary Lou Schaedig	_____	Bulletin Folders: Terry & Marilyn Clute, Mert & Cindy Gabara
	5 28 & 29	Gail Freeman	Pat Glomski	_____	_____

\* NOTE \* This is the 1st, 5th Sunday of the year, therefore, the 1st Sunday of the month ushering team will serve.