

Immanuel Lutheran Swea City

March/April Newsletter



A couple of weeks ago, as I was making small talk before Sunday service, I was asked if I had seen the weather forecast for the week ahead and did I know a winter storm was predicted. "Of course it is," I responded, "It's Ash Wednesday this week so why wouldn't we have a blizzard!"

I have to admit, I'm not a huge fan of snow and blizzards, especially in March, but I do love the beauty of the aftermath. On a day where we traditionally mark ourselves with dark ashes, the world was covered with pure white snow. A fitting analogy. While Satan would have us defined by the dark stain of sin, Jesus' blood covers us and makes us pure as freshly fallen snow.

When the storm subsided and I ventured back out into the world, I was greeted with bright beams of sunlight bouncing off every surface I looked at reminding me that God dwells in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6:16). Why? Because he knows no darkness and has no shadow.

As spring attempts claim its place, we jump an hour ahead on the clocks and watch as a few more minutes of daylight are added each day. We come out of darkness and nature celebrates new life as the trees begin to grow leaves, grass begins to turn green, and animals of all sorts have babies. The same is true for us during the Lenten season.

During Lent, we traditionally give up something intended to remind us, in some small way, of all Jesus gave up for us so we could know the freedom of forgiveness. During Holy Week, we remember the events of the last days He walked this earth from his celebrated entry into Jerusalem to his betrayal and death on the cross. We embrace the pain and sorrow of broken hearts and shattered dreams as we leave the church in darkness and silence on Good Friday.

We sit with that heaviness throughout Saturday as we wait, just as the disciples did, to see what will happen next. And what happened next changed everything. Death was defeated as Jesus rose from the grave! What was lost in the garden was redeemed by the Messiah! When Mary went to tomb to finish the final steps to lay the body of her beloved Jesus to rest, she found, not Easter Eggs, but an empty grave. Let us run to tell everyone as she ran to tell the disciples: "CHRIST IS RISEN!" For in that moment, we were made forever free from sin so that one day we may stand in God's unapproachable light as his beloved child.

~Pastor Sara

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Thursday, April 3

Church Work Day

Sunday, April 13

Palm Sunday Service & Brunch

Thursday, April 17

Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 18

Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 20

Easter Sunday Celebration

Sunday, June 29

150th Anniversary Celebration

Camp Events

www.okoboji.org

See page 5!



Council Meeting Highlights

Want to see the full approved minutes of the council meetings? You can now check them out on our NEW website! www.immanuelswearcity.com They will be posted once approved on the communications page. Minutes will remain on the website for a minimum of one year.

February Highlights

- A special donation was made to go towards Beacon of Hope, 4 Daughters, Go Serve Global and Mighty Warriors and has been distributed.
- Pastor Sara's first newspaper column was submitted for publication in the Swea Herald Press.
- In a recent detailed walkthrough of the church property, several repair issues have come to light including the need to fix or replace several exterior doors and keep tabs on the tiles on the floor in the social hall. The Property Committee is in the process of getting bids and prioritizing the work to be done.
- We were informed that Church Mutual will no longer be carrying us as a client meaning we will need to find a different company to insure our building.
- The 150th Anniversary Committee has met as is starting to get things rolling. If you are interested in helping, please get in touch with Janet Deim or Pastor Sara.

March Highlights

- Pastor Sara has been working to get ahead of Lenten projects and messages. Confirmation is going well and the website is being used. Please continue to pray for the Mighty Warriors Kids (volunteers needed) and Youth (guidance needed) programs.
- We could use a few more Sunday School teachers yet this spring. Please get in touch with Janet Deim.
- Bids for replacement and repairs of exterior doors were discussed with a decision to go with American Glass of Algona.
- A spring clean up day was set for Thursday, April 3rd. We will be focusing on closets and storage areas where things need to be hauled away.
- Becky is working on lining up a choir for Easter Sunday.
- Our previous insurance carrier cancelled our policy effective March 9th. We have voted to go with Brotherhood Mutual as no other carriers were willing to provide a quote at this time. A congregational update is planned for the first Sunday of April.
- Use of the social hall was approved for the Veteran's Day supper on November 9th being put on by SCIL and Swea City Park and Rec.



CHURCH WORKDAY

Thursday, April 3rd

9:00 AM until done!

As we look forward to celebrating our 150th Anniversary this summer, there are some areas of the church that need a little extra help and attention to be sure they are looking their best. Many hands make light work and we would love for you to join in! There are tasks for all skill levels so no one has to feel left out!

Please be watching your email and the weekly bulletin for more details!

Mission Of The Month

February

Beacon of Hope —
Fort Dodge, IA
beaconofhopeshelter.com

Beacon of Hope is a shelter for homeless men in Fort Dodge. They focus on reaching out to men who are homeless, hungry, and/or in need of hope by demonstrating the Grace of Christ through food, shelter, clothing, and the Word of God. We are excited to welcome Brian Bidleman to share about Beacon of Hope on Sunday, February 9th.

Money Raised: \$283

March

Gift of Life Transplant
House—Rochester, MN
gift-of-life.org

The Gift of Life Transplant House seeks to offer a place to stay and practical support for those patients and families who must stay close to a major hospital in anticipation of, and in recovery from, receiving an organ donation. This vital ministry helps patients be able to receive this life saving treatment from the nearby Mayo Hospitals and Clinics.

Money Raised: TBD

April

JOY Camp—Milford, IA
www.campokoboji.org/special-needs-camps.php

JOY Camp exists to provide individuals with developmental needs an enrichment experience in which they engage in fun activities, are built up in Christian Community, & grow in the faith. Held two different weeks in the summer with events during the year to reconnect, this camp is a highlight for both participants and volunteers.

Money Raised: TBD

**WE'RE
ONLINE!**

Immanuel Lutheran now has an official online home! Check out our new website at www.immanuelswecity.com! Basic information about who we are, when we meet, how to connect with us, and recent church communications can be found here. It isn't the fanciest of websites which fits us well because we aren't all about being the fanciest of people! Please help spread the word and pray that when people are searching for a church in this area, this new website will make it easier for Immanuel to be found!

Sunday, June 29th

Worship and Festivities

Mark your calendars and spread the word. Invite everyone! We are celebrating 150 years as a congregation! Worship service with lunch to follow. More fun to come!

150th
ANNIVERSARY

Welcome Evelyn Mable Jorgenson



Please join in welcoming Evelyn to our family of faith through the Sacrament of Baptism! When she isn't trying get ahold of Pastor Sara's fun looking necklace, she is busy keeping mom and dad on their toes and she teaches them how to be her parents! Be praying for Evelyn and her parents, Landon and Shayla, as they continue to learn what it means to be a family of three!



Be on the lookout!

New Acolytes

Coming soon to a service near you!

We have some excited young people who have been taking some time to practice being part of our Sunday Services through the ministry of acolyte. They are both nervous and excited to give this a try on an upcoming Sunday service! Be on the lookout for these (and perhaps one or two more) and be sure to encourage them as they embrace a new way to be active members of Immanuel Swea City!





Mighty Warriors Kids and Youth

When: Wednesdays - After school for kids (grades 1-5) 6-8pm for youth (grades 6-12)

Both Mighty Warriors Kids and Mighty Warriors Youth continue to meet on Wednesdays! Programs are open any youth in our local area who wishes to participate regardless of the school they attend.

Mighty Warriors is a program put on by the North Kossuth Ministerial Association and is a cooperative effort primarily between the churches of Ledyard and Swea City.

Sunday School classes during our 9am Worship Service are off an running again with the new year! Starting in February, they will studying the 10 Commandments and learning about how they help us grow in our relationship with Jesus still today!

CHILDREN'S Sunday School



Confirmation

Confirmation classes for any teen grades 6 and above are meeting again. Meeting time will be set based on what works for the kids who are attending the class. Topics to be covered yet this year are: 10 Commandments, Lord's Prayer, and Sacraments.

Summer Camp Registration

Now Open!

Registration for all youth and family summer programs at IOLBC is now open! The church will pay up to \$50 per student to attend camp through IOLBC with additional funds available if needed.

Don't forget about great ADULT programs as well!

May 2-4: Spring Crafting Retreat

June 2-3: Elderversity

Sept. 23-Oct 1: Travel Camp: Boston

For more information, talk to Pastor Sara!

INGHAM OKOBOJI LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMPS

SUMMER CAMP '25

FAMILY CAMP & YOUTH CAMP PROGRAMS

REGISTER TODAY!
WWW.OKOBOJI.ORG



HOLY WEEK

at Immanuel Swea City

Sunday, April 13—Palm Sunday Service—9:00AM—Kids and kids at heart are invited to gather in the entry way to part of the processional with the waving of palm branches.

Sunday, April 13—Palm Sunday Potluck Brunch—10:30AM—Bring your favorite breakfast inspired dish and stay for delicious treats and fellowship after the Palm Sunday Service

Thursday, April 17—Holy Thursday Service—6:30PM—Join us for a time of remembering the Last Supper on the night Jesus was betrayed.

Friday, April 18—Good Friday Service—6:30PM—On this day we gather and remember that moment where it felt like all hope was lost as Jesus was nailed to the cross for each us.

Sunday, April 20th—Easter Sunday Service—9:00AM—HE IS RISEN! We look forward to celebrating that death could not hold Him who knew no sin and proclaim, as Mary Magdalene did all those years ago: He is risen!

Immanuel Lutheran Church
104 1st Street North
Swea City, IA 50590

The Immanuel Lutheran
Church Newsletter

TO:

