

# The Lutheran Beacon

## Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

304 Spruce St., P.O. Box 466, Tower, MN 55790

February 2020



Dear Immanuel,

The scripture verse that is being used in the 2019 Annual Report covers from the ELCA is 2 Corinthians 5:17:

*"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new!"*

What a great verse to center into an annual meeting on. What a great verse to lead us into a new year together. A new year, a new creation. A fresh start; a time to revitalize; a time to renew; a time to move forward! This is all good news! This is also scary and fear filled. It can be hard to let go of the old and settle into something new.

We don't know what "new" might be found, brought to, stumbled upon, stirred up here at Immanuel and that is partially what is scary about it! The unknown, the time in between, the waiting can all raise anxiety, make

us uncomfortable and cause cracks in the old while we wait for the new.

Don't you think that each year brings newness and change whether we plan for it, count on it or know about it ahead of time? Each year when we reflect back we see how transformed we are and have become in 12 months. The same is true for us as a congregation. Over the year we encounter guests, we welcome new members, we have funerals and baptisms. Our committees change, council changes, staff changes. We are never the same and as partners with Christ, as co-creators with our living God, of course nothing stays the same, because everything old as passed away in, with and through Christ.... Everything has become new!

This year a new bishop will be elected for our NEMN Synod and with that will bring change, transformation, newness! Bishop Tom as been our bishop for the last 12 years and our Synod has been blessed by his leadership, but again the time has come for someone else to be called forth to lead the Synod into another chapter, another time, a new decade. Hold the bishop in your prayers as he finishes up his last year and also be praying for God to call forth what is needed in the next bishop to be able to faithfully, truthfully and transparently lead our Synod into a new time of being church in a world that is so hurting and broken right now.

The bishop election will be held May 1-3, 2020 at the DECC during the NEMN Synod Assembly. We will be voting in two voting members at our annual meeting to this Assembly at which they will be a part of the election process and voting in of our new bishop. On February 1 all those nominated for candidate of bishop will be released on the NEMN Synod website. On February 9<sup>th</sup> at the Conference Assembly meetings, last years voting members (for us it is

Dan and Faye Mobilia) will gather with pastors to vote from the list of nominees to become candidates for bishop. After the Conference Assembly meetings a list of candidates will be announced and then three Bishop Candidate Forums will be provide nominees an opportunity to speak and respond to questions from the members of the synod:

3/12: Calvary, Mora 7 pm; 3/13: St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids 7 pm; 3/13: Grace Lutheran, Hermantown 3 pm

This is an important time in our church, in our congregation, in our Synod. God is up to something! This Spirit is stirring! How exciting!

Pastor Liz



- 2 **Garrett Lamppa**
- 4 **Whitney Cobby**
- 6 **Kalee Bjorgo**
- 9 **Joan Lamppa**
- 12 **Delores Hujanen**
- 14 **Emmi Aluni**
- 15 **Bill Meehan**
- 15 **Terrence Peitso**
- 16 **Piper Bundy**
- 16 **Faye Mobilia**
- 18 **Dorothy Aronen**
- 18 **Bob Swartz**
- 22 **Elaine Mcgillivray**

**Offering & Attendance**

Date	Attendance	Offering
December 24	111	\$1253.00
December 29	17	\$1441.00
January 5	55	\$7641.00
January 12	58	\$3575.00
January 19	57	\$1577.25

*\*Please note, the January 5<sup>th</sup> offering reflects a large, annual contribution to the church in lieu of weekly offerings; the January 12<sup>th</sup> offering reflects the once monthly contribution of members opting to give by auto-withdrawal*

**December 2019**

Income: \$12,887  
 Expenses: \$11,204  
 World Hunger \$443.26

**Year To Date: (January - December 2018)**

2019 Income: \$149,533 / Expenses: \$134,801  
 2018 Income: \$190,461 / Expenses: \$177,498

**Volunteers**

*The month of February is in need of volunteers! Communion prep, ushers, and fellowship hosts are needed for most weeks. Please consider participating!*

**USHERS**

February 3 Open  
 February 10 Open  
 February 17 Open  
 February 24 Open

**COMMUNION PREP**

February 3 Open  
 February 10 Open  
 February 17 Open  
 February 24 Open

**LECTORS**

February 2 Jarri Ankrum  
 February 9 Faye Mobilia  
 February 16 Janet White  
 February 23 Lynn Scott

*\*\*If you can volunteer on any of these days, please contact Amber at 753-2378 or sign up in the Narthex.*

**Council Notes**

Immanuel's Church Council met on January 14th. Some of the highlights were:

1. Plans are being made for window installment in the spring.
2. The strategic goals committee is considering hosting another hospice presentation.
3. Plans for 2020 Mission trips were set.

The next Council Meeting will be held February 11th at 1:00 p.m. The church minutes are available for viewing in a binder in the church office.

## **Soldier Project Volunteers**

Thank you to all of you who contributed to the soldiers' Christmas project. Your donations and goodies were appreciated...as noted in the thank you's posted on the downstairs bulletin board. Be sure to look at the three picture "thank you's" from the Adam Mackie family (Adam is now "retired" from the service). They're so much fun!

## **2020 Offering Envelopes & 2019 Contribution Statements**

Offering envelopes for 2020 and 2019 Contribution Statements are available in the Narthex for you to pick up. If you were missed, please let the office know.



## **WELCA**

The first womens meeting of 2020 was held on January 8th at 1 p.m.

PLEASE MAKE A NOTE THAT WE WILL BE CHANGING THE START TIME TO 2 p.m. starting with our February meeting on February 12th.

Our Sunshine Committee blessed several by sending one get well, four birthday, one sympathy, and eight Christmas cards in December.

The Christmas luncheon was discussed and all were in agreement on the delectable meal and fun fellowship. There was also discussion on changing it to a Valentines dinner for the entire congregation and community. With Christmas being such a busy season and winter drifts on through March a break in February would be enjoyable for many. We will discuss it further this fall.

The quilters resumed January 8th after taking a December break. The quilts blessed and shipped were so breathtaking. Thank you, ladies, for the great job!

The Parish Nursing had nothing new to report but will continually provide shawls to those in need, as well as, making calls and visits.

Officer Dan Nylund will be the guest speaker at our February meeting. Some suggestions of topics were scams, homelessness, and connections and services between them and our social service agencies. It should be a very interesting and informative presentation. MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR February 12th.

Problems with the large coffee pot were discussed. We will be doing some research over the next couple months for a large volume dependable replacement.

Faye Mobilia served a delightful dessert for our time of fellowship in January. The hostess for February will be Jarri Ankrum. Join US for a time of service and fellowship on the second Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m.

## **St. Martin's 'Souper Bowl' of Caring**

You are invited to attend the 'Souper Bowl' fundraiser for the Tower-Soudan Food Shelf. St. Martin's Youth will be hosting the event at the church social hall on Sunday, Febraury 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11:30 – 1:00. Booyah, rolls, beverages and dessert will be served. Take-outs will be available. Please join us in this partnership of caring.

## **Ash Wednesday**

Ash Wednesday services will be held on Wednesday, February 26th at 6:00 p.m. Join us as we begin another season of Lent. Mid-week Lenten services will be held March 4, 11, 18, 25, and 1st. Soup suppers will be held before worship. Please watch the Sunday bulletin and March newsletter for times and information about soup supper for the mid-week services and a Holy week schedule.

## **VLM Summer Camp 2020**

VLM Summer Camp is open for registration! Early Bird Registration Deadline is February 15<sup>th</sup> so be sure to take advantage of the savings! Visit [www.VLMcamps.org](http://www.VLMcamps.org) to register or call the VLM office at 218-666-5465 for paper forms and assistance. There are camps available for elementary, junior high and high school students and include one-day, two-night, and week-long options!

## **Guatemala News**

Please see the annual report for an update from Missionaries Brad and Shawn Johnson. Brad and Shawn are missionaries who work with Recycled Lives and we offer missionary support as a line item in our budget. Shawn is also the founder of Recycled

Lives, the Non-Profit organization in which the ministry her and Brad carry out as well as the work the mission teams we send is also in, through and with Recycled Lives. This distinction is important to understand as we support Missionaries, mission teams and Recycled lives, which are three different things, and yet they all come together through the NPO Recycled Lives. If you have any questions ever about how these three things come together or how you can support one or all three of them, please see Pastor Liz and she would be happy to help you.

In other Guatemala news..... Pastor Liz, Shelley Padgett and Heather Chaulklin will be in Guatemala March 23 - April 1. Pastor Liz will be leading this small team during some vacation time in which the team will provide community Bible Study and VBS activities, community meal, bunk beds, cook stoves and possibly lamina. A special "in memory of" project (yet to be determined) will be completed thanks to a memorial gift by one of our members. If you feel called to help in any way please see Pastor Liz. Any financial donations can be written to Recycled Lives and given to Pastor and she will send them in so they can be earmarked for the March team.

Please join the team for a Pasty Meal from 11:30 - 2:00 in the fellowship hall at Immanuel on Sunday, February 23rd. The team will be making pasties for the meal and for individual sale. You can pre order by seeing Shelley Padgett with your order or pick them up at the meal on Feb. 23rd. If you are interested in helping with pasty prep please see Pastor Liz for dates and times.

A beautiful hand made quilt will be raffled off as well. The quilt is hanging in the sanctuary (The wall near the offices) and it was given to Pastor Liz by Delores Scott, who is Lynn Scott's mother. Delores is a supporter of Recycled Lives, she has a special place in her heart for Guatemala. This last summer she gave Pastor Liz this beautiful quilt to be used in any way to support the work we do in Guatemala. So tickets will be available to purchase and the drawing for the quilt winner will be on February 23rd at 2:00 at the end of the pasty meal. Tickets are \$1.00 and all proceeds will go towards our ministry projects.

Thank you all for your continued support of the amazing ministry and mission work we are called to in Guatemala. In 2020, Pastor will be leading two teams, one in March (using her vacation time to do so) and one in late July early August. The summer trip will become the annual trip. For the last four years the annual trip has taken place in November,

and as a way to offer the opportunity to more people changing the time of year for the annual trip from time to time is necessary. Some people can't get away during the school year. The summer trip is the mission team that will be sponsored by Immanuel and more focused and bigger fundraisers will be planned. Pastor Liz wants the congregation to be clear about the trips in 2020 as you discern when and where your support for such teams will come in. Regardless of which team/trip you support in 2020 your financial donations make a difference in the lives of the people we serve in San Gabriel. A bunk bed now or a bunk bed this summer makes a difference and the funds raised go directly to the people for their specific needs. The team members as well as Pastor Liz pay for their own airfare and mission trip. Pasty sales are split between ministry projects and personal funds. Again if you have any questions please see Pastor Liz.

## **The Power of Prayer**

We all have a prayer life. At church, mornings, evenings, before mealtimes, and my favorite saying of prayer is ACTS. ADORNING our heavenly father, CONFESSING our sin, THANKING him for our unlimited blessings, and SUPPLICATION for our needs. Our church has a prayer chain. It is a group of congregational members that know the power of prayer and realize that the larger group of warriors the more peace we each receive. We would like to encourage you to become a part of that group. A chain of people are created. The first calls the second and the chain continues. One call to spread the need of others that we lift up to the Lord. Please prayerfully consider being an instrument of faith and become part of this chain. Call Cindy Zollar at 218-753-3632 or 218-780-6756 to become a warrior of Immanuel Lutheran Church. We can never have too many reaching out for those in need.

## **Lost in the Night**

**Re-printed with permission from Kyle Terrio-Johnson, originally written for Voyageur's Lutheran Ministry Newsletter**

"Stories are light. Light is precious in a world so dark. Begin at the beginning. Tell a story. Make some light."  
— **Kate DiCamillo**

As long as my wife, Cari, and I have been married, we have celebrated all twelve days of Christmas. Yes; all twelve, starting with Christmas Eve and going until January 5th. We have a decorated tree lit in our living room, and a Nativity that will not move until the Wise

Men arrive with their gifts and the warning about Herod.

That first week after Christmas can be a hard one. No evergreen smell as I enter the house; all reminders of the baby in the manger are put away, and even the music playing on the radio is different.

We spend so much time preparing for the arrival of the light, yet we seem to drop all reminders that the light is coming right in the middle of days that, although getting longer, are still short and gloomy. Even the lights of the ski hill just do not make up for the lack of sunshine, and summertime seems oh so far away.

It is at these times that I am tempted to succumb to what my wife calls the "winter sads," our own personal brand of Seasonal Affective Disorder. A nap on the couch starts to sound better than anything this time of year. We've just spent so much time preparing and welcoming the light that is Jesus Christ, how can it be that the light seems so dim right now?

Well, it doesn't have to be.

When Christ came to us, he became flesh, shared humanity, and had a body, not unlike the body you and I all have. It is this shared humanity, this body that binds us all together as one in Christ, and it brings with it an additional responsibility:

We are to be the light.

It is not up to God to shine the light for us, it is up to us to share the light of Christ, our bodies to shine like the angels bringing news to the shepherds. Only this time it is we who are to deliver the good news of Jesus Christ.

I'm not saying that you need to stand on a street corner and proclaim at the top of your lungs, (but if the street preacher route is how you want to do this, more power to you) but by simply living as God asks us to live, be kind to our neighbors, share our abundance with others less fortunate. Heck, you can simply let that car merge in front of you on your evening commute.

If you can be the light of Jesus in your actions, thoughts and words, you will shine with a light so bright the darkness can never overcome it.

*Light o'er the land of the needy is beaming;  
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,*

*bringing all peoples a Savior redeeming.  
Come and save us soon! Come and save us soon!  
-Lost in the Night, verse 4, ELW 243, a Nordic Hymn*

### **Members Who Are Homebound**

**Jim Charles** (Birthday May 5)  
4559 Shoreline Drive, Apt#304  
Spring Park, MN 55384

**Elsie Dahl** (Birthday April 23)  
Edgewood Vista  
705 17<sup>th</sup> St. N., Rm. #134  
Virginia MN 55792

**Edith Eidelbes** (Birthday March 21)  
Carefree Living  
421 10<sup>th</sup> St. S., Rm. #1  
Virginia, MN 55790

**Ron Hujanen** (Birthday November 25)  
Cook Hospital & Nursing Home Room S-204  
10 5<sup>th</sup> St SE  
Cook MN 55723

**Eileen Swanson** (Birthday July 11)  
Vermilion Senior Living  
Tower, MN 55790

### **Contact Us**

Church Office: 753-2378

[ielctower@gmail.com](mailto:ielctower@gmail.com)

[www.towerlutheran.com](http://www.towerlutheran.com)

[www.facebook.com/ImmanuelTower](http://www.facebook.com/ImmanuelTower)

Regular Office Hours are Tuesday 9:00 – 1:00,  
Wednesday – Friday 8:30 – 12:30

#### **STAFF**

**Pastor:** Rev. Liz Cheney

**Office Manager:** Amber Zak

**Education Assistant:** Rebecca Bundy

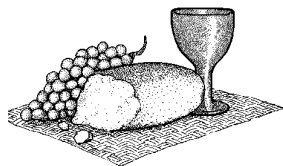
**Minister of Music:** MaryBeth Reller

**Custodian:** James Urick

304 Spruce St.  
PO Box 466  
Tower, MN 55790



IMMANUEL  
CARE. SHARE. WELCOME. ELCA.



*Please join us for worship with holy  
communion every Sunday at 10:00*

**Contact Pastor Liz Cheney at**  
218-780-8907

[lizcheney44@gmail.com](mailto:lizcheney44@gmail.com) (personal & private)  
[ielctower@gmail.com](mailto:ielctower@gmail.com) (public)