



IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

MESSENGER

July 2019

Mission Statement

Immanuel Lutheran Church invites all people into a community of Jesus Christ, equipping them to be disciples and sending them forth to serve and witness in Jesus' name

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Reverend Jakob Schumacher

A Lutheran Church of the Montana Synod of the ELCA. A welcoming church in a friendly community, walking together in faith

TRUST

Philippians 1: Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. ²⁰ I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²

At the Synod Assembly in Great Falls this last month, we were honored to have Bishop WR Bowles from our companion synod in South Africa come and give a workshop. In the workshop, he described their synod and the similarities that they have with the Montana Synod. The Cape Orange Diocese is in a rural part of South Africa that has been affected by people moving to the big cities to find work. Unemployment in South Africa is at 27%, and this has caused significant challenges for the country. It has especially affected young people graduating from college who then are unable to find jobs.

The bishop also said that the Lutheran church in South Africa has been seeing a decline in membership but for different reasons than what you might see in Montana. In South Africa, Christians aren't moving from Christianity to some other religion or becoming non-religious. They are leaving the Lutheran church and moving to Pentecostal churches. And from his observations, one of the main reasons was because these Pentecostal churches preach a "*prosperity gospel*" that is very appealing to people who are going through difficult times. The message becomes something like, "If you need a job, cure or fix for this situation, all you have to do is pray for it and it will be yours." You can see how this would be very appealing for those who are unemployed or struggling to make ends meet.

But modern Christianity in America struggles with this balance as well. Many churches offer a certainty message by promising members health, wealth and overall prosperity. Not to say that these can't be true and it's not that God doesn't want to bless us in different ways, but what happens when those prayers don't get answered in the way we wanted? What happens when the 11th month turns into the 12th month of your unemployment streak? What happens when

we've treated God like a vending machine and we've specified the amount of money to get what we want, but our prayer doesn't produce what we wanted? Is this because of a lack of faith on our part? Is it because we have sinned in some way that God is now punishing us? These become fair questions when a prosperity gospel message isn't becoming a reality.

For Lutherans, we often use the synonym "trust" to help us describe what faith means. Having faith means to trust in the person or God that you have faith in. Trust doesn't mean that we have all the answers. In fact, trust often implies that we don't have the answers but that we believe in the goodness and guidance of God despite the unknown. Paul in these Philippians verses exhibits this kind of faith. His trust in God is not based on the promise of health, wealth and overall prosperity. His hope and joy instead come from the gospel message that enables him to proclaim, "For me, to live is Christ, to die is gain." Paul's faith is in Christ who saved him and brought him into an eternal relationship with God. He will later say in Philippians, "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." But he is content because he knows that he has Christ.

So, in the moments of success in life where everything is going well, we know that God loves us and is there for us. And in the moments of struggle and unknown, this same God, made known to us through Christ, is there for us as well. Our hope and trust are based on a bigger understanding of what God's grace has done for us and this world. And we can say with confidence that God is with us through the best and through the worst life has to offer. He is guiding, strengthening and reminding us of His eternal promises.

Pastor Jake

President's Message June 2019

We are starting July and it seems like summer is finally here. Before long everyone will be complaining about the heat and looking forward to fall. I notice in myself that I occasionally get wrapped up in where I

am going and I forget to enjoy the journey of getting there. I am always trying to look for the next best thing; whether it is the weather or the season. When it is cool I want it to be hot and when it is football season I am looking forward to basketball. This year I am going to make a concerted effort to enjoy the things that are going on right now. All of us need to remember to appreciate all of the wonderful blessings that God has given us.

In June we celebrated Emmet Peabody's confirmation, welcomed new members, had a youth night out at the Chandler's, finished up the women's book study, met for dinner, drinks and theology at Steve and Jan Aadland's, and Sunday we will gather at Dan and Emily Aadland's for an outdoor service. There has been so much going on that I am sure I've missed something. I have to say that I am really thankful for Pastor Jake and Mandy for getting us going.

I will be gone the first part of July on vacation, but Robert Mitchell has graciously agreed to take over for me until I get back. I am really going to try to enjoy this vacation and not worry about all of the things stacking up on my desk while I am gone.

Tanya Lester, President

Minutes of Immanuel Council June 11, 2019

Call to Order at 7:30 p.m. by President Tanya Lester. Present were Georgette Scheafer, Dan Aadland, Karen Reiner, Tanya Lester, Robert Mitchell, John Schatz, Thale Arthun and Pastor Schumacher. Absent—Mary K. Bjorndal.

Devotions—Focus was on John 20, Christ appearing, saying “Peace be with you” and showing his wounds. Discussion of “Sins forgiven, sins retained.” Closed with Psalm 104. Pastor Schumacher

Minutes—Approved via email. Dan Aadland, Secretary

Pastor's Report—The preaching conference recently attended was excellent, with around 2000 pastors in attendance, 40% of them Lutheran. Emmet's confirmation went great, as did the dinner for new members. Youth will attend a fun night Friday at five at Chandler's.

An update on synod resolutions, passed with some changes, was handed out. The Messenger contains information about election of the new Bishop. Pastor Schumacher

Committee Reports and Assignments

- 1) Worship—Outdoor service next Sunday, John Chepulis will cook meat, potluck the rest. We'll set up at 9:30 Saturday. Dan will work on publicity. Dan
- 2) Evangelism—summer lunch program is going well. Thale
- 3) Faith Formation—book study is going well. Pastor
- 4) Stewardship—no report. Karen
- 5) Property and Maintenance-- routine parsonage sewer clean-out will be scheduled. Katrin and Hannes are mowing. John
- 6) Memorials—no activity. Georgette
- 7) Scholarship—two scholarships given, to Rebecca and Kolton. Some contributions are coming in. Dan
- 8) Finance--Financials going well, though still tight. Donations will cover cost of summer lunch program. Committee recommends acceptance of report. Robert

Unfinished Business

- 1) Treasurer's Report --Robert moved, John seconded to approve report. Motion passed.
- 2) Finance Committee Requests--no additional requests
- 3) Wedding Policy Revision—no action.

New Business

- 1) Membership List—adjustments made. List is of active members and friends, not of voting members as outlined in Constitution.
- 2) Church Safety—Dan reported on a conference with Deputy Crane. Will do additional research.
- 3) Barbecue next week--We'll man a booth with root beer floats. Volunteers needed. Pastor.
- 4) Council membership—The Council feels there's no need to appoint members to fill vacancies at this time, since it's not that long until the annual meeting, when members will be elected.

Next Meeting—Vice President Robert Mitchell will preside over the July 9 meeting in Tanya's absence.

Sunday Coordinators: June - Robert

July - Thale

Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Dan Aadland, Secretary

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Emma Chandler	July 2
Katrin Chandler	July 9
Kyle Mitchell	July 15
Bryan Weier	July 15
Shirley Schatz	July 17
Mikol Degele	July 21
Robert Mitchell	July 24
Mark Chase	July 26
Makayla Peterson	July 29
Nancy Chase	July 31

How elementary students finish some well-known proverbs:

- If at first you don't succeed - get new batteries.
- You get out of something only what you - see in the picture on the box.
- When the blind lead the blind - get out of the way.
- A bird in the hand - is going to poop on you!

HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY!!!

HAPPY SUMMER!!!

GOD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU SAFE

