

March 2022



First Lutheran Church
240 W. Hardanger Gate
Lee, IL 60530
815.824.2356

The Parish Voice

A NEWSLETTER OF HEART OF ILLINOIS LUTHERAN

Immanuel Lutheran Church
398 Church Road
Compton, IL 61318
815.539.6567

First Annual Meeting

Thirteen people gathered on the thirteenth of February for First Lutheran's annual meeting.

The election of the council took place with Tom Thompson and Mike Davis being newly elected to council. Dave Koroscik, Becky Jarman, and Julie Lovett are the outgoing council members. After a three year transition following the adopting of the new constitution, the council now consists of five as stipulated in the constitution: Jim Johnson, Mike Davis, Tom Thompson, Alex Johnson and Janell Koroscik. The positions of synod assembly delegates were referred to council to fill.

The reports, as well as the 2022 budget were passed with minimal discussion. The biggest change in the budget regards many of the benevolence line items. Rather than include them as regular line items, the council recommended

that we make special appeals for some of the organizations that we normally make donations to from the general fund. Those special appeals may include retiring offerings, envelopes in the newsletter or other means. If we highlight these organizations and the good work they do, our offerings may far exceed the small amounts we offered from the general fund.

The other key piece of business regarded the roof project at the church. Those present reaffirmed the authorization made a few years ago at an annual meeting for the council to go forward seeking and securing bids to replace the roof of the church. The council met briefly on the 20th after worship to elect officers. The 2022 officers include Jim Johnson as president, Mike Davis as vice president, and Alex Johnson as secretary.

These are not official minutes, just a recap.

New Mask Protocol

With the new recommendations of the CDC and the state, we will be removing the requirement to wear masks during worship at Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish.

Though masks will no longer be required, we want to continue to be concerned about the health and wellbeing of our neighbors. Thus, we ask you to consider the following things regarding masks in worship:

- If you have even a slight symptom, please consider wearing a mask – better safe than sorry.
- Singing is an activity that spreads more germs and pushes them farther. So if you're one who likes to make a joyful noise to the Lord, not holding back with your singing, you may want to consider putting the mask on just for singing. This is especially true if you are less than twelve feet from others.
- We hope to begin coming forward for communion soon. When we do, Pastor Jeff will be masked and probably even wearing gloves. He will continue this practice until infection rates drop further.
- If you are gathering in the basement of either congregation, you may want to consider putting a mask on as the ventilation is not as effective as in the sanctuaries.
- When you are deciding whether or not you will be wearing a mask, please place the safety and comfort of your neighbors at the top of the list of considerations.



There is a joint council meeting on March 10th at which time we will be revisiting all of our pandemic protocols at Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish.

Jeff's Jottings – It's Time

You may have noticed that your pastor has not been strongly encouraging you to come to worship for nearly two years now. That is not because I don't want to see you there. It's simply because in light of the pandemic, even during the times where the infection rates were decreasing and relatively low, I could not in good conscience encourage you to place yourself in a potentially at-risk situation.

But the time has come. I now ask you to begin to attend in-person worship once again. It appears that we have arrived at a point with vaccinations and infection rates when we can begin the transition back to "normal." That does not mean everything reverts fully overnight, but we can move in that direction. And one of the moves I invite you to make is to return to worship on a regular basis.

We have worked hard to provide quality online worship experiences, as Janell Koroscik said in last week's council led service, "It's not the same as being together in worship." Worship is about gathering as a community of believers. As we move to the other side of this pandemic, let's reclaim that communal aspect of worship.

So should you see me around town or we talk on the phone, you can expect me to encourage you to come to in-person worship on Sunday. If you tell me that you aren't ready just yet, I will be understanding and won't try to twist your arm. But I would encourage you to determine at what point you will feel comfortable returning on Sunday morning, and when that time comes, come on down to church and join us for worship.

PJ requests your presence at...

In-Person Worship
8:30 a.m. Immanuel
10:30 a.m. First

Our video ministry has truly been a blessing over the last two years. It has allowed us to stay connected and provided worship experiences when our buildings were closed. But the videos were never intended to be a substitute for gathering together as a community. They were intended to fill the gap when we weren't able to gather. We won't abandon video services as the pandemic wanes. We have seen their value as outreach and for people who are unable to attend worship. Whatever form video takes as we go forward, it will not be with the purpose as a substitute or alternative to what we do together on Sunday mornings.

It is time to gather back together again on Sunday mornings for worship. I encourage you to reclaim your habit of weekly worship. You can see me on the videos, but I can't see you. I want to see you on Sunday mornings. And so, I conclude this column in the manner I used to before March of 2020...

I'll see you in worship on Sunday!

PJ

WELCA

JUSTICE (Mission Action) – Charlene Zimmerman

What does the Lord require of you but to do *justice*, love kindness and walk humbly with your God. (*Micah 6:8*)

We are starting to collect items for **LWR Personal Care Kits**: light or medium weight dark color bath towels, sturdy combs (not fine tooth or picks), 4-5 oz. size bars of bath soap in wrappers, nail clippers, toothbrushes.

Please put your donations in appropriate totes in the room next to the office. **Thank you.**

WELCA President's Desk – Sarah Pfeifer

NIS-WELCA Retreat, Saturday, April 30, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm. "Praising God with all that we are!". Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center, 1834 S. IL Rt. 2, Oregon, IL. Program & Worship: Pastor Bree Truax, Immanuel Lutheran, Rock Falls. Cost: \$25.00 made payable to "NISWO" (coffee, snacks, lunch, materials). Send form & check to: Kim Choin, 7400 East Oakwood Dr., Wonder Lake, IL 60097. Scholarships available until March 15. Both forms are available at Immanuel.

Worship

Midweek Lent Series: Open My Life, Lord

We will be gathering in-person for our midweek Lent services this year. PJ is excited to be able to gather again. In 2020 we had one service prior to the pandemic hit. So we have not had the opportunity to gather fully for Lent since 2019.

The theme this year is “Open My Life.” Each week we consider how we are called to use various parts of our body to serve Christ before concluding with the call to serve with our life itself. Here’s a brief description of each week:

- *Week 1 – March 9: Open My Eyes, Lord*
 - Paul saw the light of Christ shining around him on the road to Damascus. As individuals and communities, what do we have difficulty seeing? How does our perspective change when we view the world through the eyes of Christ?
- *Week 2 – March 16: Open My Hands, Lord*
 - We use our hands to pick up a child, to serve a meal, to play an instrument, to wipe away a tear. Jesus used his hands for healing and for deeds of great power, and the psalmist reminds us that we are always held fast in God’s hands. In Deuteronomy, Moses encourages us to open our hands in service to others.
- *Week 3 – March 23: Open My Ears, Lord*
 - Ancient Greek philosophy notes that we have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak. Jesus reminds us that we sometimes hear but don’t listen, listen but don’t understand. Opening our ears isn’t as easy as it sounds.
- *Week 4 – March 30: Open My Heart, Lord*
 - Listening to Paul’s teaching, Lydia opened her heart to God and was baptized. Her willing, trusting faith echoes down through the centuries as we witness her “open heart procedure.”
- *Week 5 – April 6: Open My Life, Lord*
 - Moses presents us with a choice: death and adversity, or a life cracked open to the love of God. Writing to the Galatians, Paul tells us that we have died to the law so that we might live to God. It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us.

A Look Way Ahead in Worship

Pastor Jeff just returned from the workshop for pastors and other leaders of the synod to develop resources for Season of Creation. He can’t wait for its arrival, even though it won’t be until September and October. But prior to that, two ways which you can help:

Volunteer for Season of Creation Task Force

PJ is putting together a task force to plan and make Season of Creation even better. Please let him know if you’re willing to volunteer.

Start Taking Pictures

As always, we’ll have slide shows for the Sunday themes. Here’s the topics for you to start capturing pictures:

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| -Oceans and Lakes | -Animals |
| -Cosmos | -Storms and Weather |

This and That

N.I.C.E. Center Update

- Food/Miscellaneous Items Needed – lotions, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, pudding mixes, ketchup, pickles and large bag of chips.
- N.I.C.E. has been able to make improvements in their building (A/C, rebuilt the heating system, etc.)
- March is Immanuel's month to volunteer at N.I.C.E. from 8-11 a.m. Sign-up in the overflow, call Debbie, or show up on Saturday's.

Benevolence Offering
Immanuel's benevolence offering for March – Backpack Blessings. Please use the envelope found in this newsletter.

Thrivent Dollars: You have until the end of March to designate where you want your Thrivent Dollars to go.

Easter Lilies & Tulips are \$12.00 each. Sign up at Immanuel or call Debbie at the Immanuel office (815/539-6567) or email immanuelutherancompton@live.com
Deadline is **March 27**.

Immanuel Council Highlights

February 10, 2022

- General Treasury ending balance January 31, 2022 is \$5,200.74
- Guidelines for worship during Lent and Holy Week.
- Installation of Council Members on Sunday, February 20.
- Council members to lead Transfiguration Sunday service, February 27.
- Building/Grounds on repairs at parsonage and discussion on funding Roof Replacement.
- \$2000 from Farm 2019 funds transferred to Speaker/Performances Fund.

Immanuel Church Office Hours

Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Church office: 815-539-6567

*Debbie will be available from home in the afternoons.
If you need anything, call or text: 815-866-6690 or
email: immanuelutherancompton@live.com.*

HOILP on the Internet

Websites & Facebook

First – www.flcinlee.com
www.facebook.com/firstlutheranchurchlee
Immanuel – www.ilccompton.org
www.facebook.com/ilccompton



www.youtube.com/channel/UChxbzUMEeE1C2SIsP-YI65A

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(First Lutheran - 240 W. Hardanger Gate - Lee, IL 60530)

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 6 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)
March 13 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)
March 20 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)
March 27 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)

LENTEN SCHEDULE

March 2 – 6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service
at Immanuel
March 9 – 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service, Immanuel
March 16 – 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service, First
March 23 – 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service, Immanuel
March 30 – 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service, First
April 6 – 6:30 p.m. Lenten Service, Immanuel

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You can also check us out on Facebook!