

September 2020



# THE PARISH VOICE

**A NEWSLETTER OF HEART OF ILLINOIS LUTHERAN**

**First Lutheran Church**  
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**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
398 Church Road  
Compton, IL 61318  
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## Jeff's Jottings: Exciting Worship on the Horizon

As I write this, I'm preparing for vacation. Normally that means I have arranged for supply preachers. But not this year. I've been working hard on getting worship videos done ahead of time. So even though I will be gone, you will still see me. As they say before Steven Colbert comes out on stage for the Late Show each night, I will be, "Live on tape..."

That said, as I've been preparing, I'm pretty excited about the upcoming worship services. Not just the ones while I am going to be gone, but those that follow it as well.

It will all begin next week (Sept 6) with our "Best Of" service. Quick, think of some of your favorite portions of the worship videos over these last five plus months. Perhaps you'll see them next week as I've pieced together some of the best moments of worship.

The next Sunday we will begin an expanded "Season of Creation," which will be six weeks this year rather than four weeks. You can see what's coming up in worship on page 2.

## In-Person Worship Suspended

On August 13<sup>th</sup> the Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish councils made the decision to suspend in-person worship through Labor Day. Though we have carefully followed our protocol, which does outline the safest practices, it is the external factors that motivated the decision to move on the side of caution.

There were three key data points that brought the decision about:

- The spike in cases in Mendota has caused the city to ask businesses to cut back to phase 3 practices (as outlined in the Restore Illinois Plan)
- Mendota schools choosing to open only on-line until after Labor Day when they will reevaluate (if schools aren't comfortable meeting in person, why should we?)
- In addition, there have been seven confirmed cases in the Paw Paw zip code when previously there weren't any.

So, to assure the safety of our members, and to make sure HOILP is not party to carrying the virus toward Lee and Shabbona, the councils have decided to be extra cautious and took the undesired but necessary action of suspending our in-person worship again.

"Don't get me wrong," said one council member, "I really want to come back to worship in the church. But this disease is deadly. I don't want anybody to die. We can worship at home with in order to be safe."

Pastor Jeff and the many volunteers will continue to produce the worship videos. We will continue to work our ministries such as Bountiful Garden, NICE support and volunteering, WELCA school supply collection (which is just about complete) and so on. "We need to remember that church is not closed," said Pastor Jeff. "For safety purposes we have suspended in-person worship, but the business of following Jesus still goes forth. We will still proclaim the gospel, feed the hungry, comfort the grieving, and fight for justice."

The councils are planning to meet jointly the week after Labor Day and will evaluate the situation then. This is specific response to the context in northern LaSalle and southern Lee Counties. When the situation changes, because we already have used it, we have practices and procedures in place to safely gather again. In the meantime, we worship over the airwaves and thank God daily for our modern technology that allows us to keep in touch with one another so easily.

# WORSHIP

## Worship By The Numbers

Wondering what worship attendance has been like as a result of the pandemic? Here's the attendance figures thus far for 2020:

	<u>1st Week Views</u>	<u>Additional Views</u>	<u>ELCA Report*</u>
15-Mar	145	90	290
22-Mar	223	40	446
29-Mar	159	51	318
5-Apr	251	63	502
12-Apr	355	43	710
19-Apr	146	41	292
26-Apr	275	29	550
3-May	196	55	392
10-May	124	29	248
17-May	143	32	286
24-May	117	20	234
31-May	116	24	232
7-Jun	130	19	260
14-Jun	123	17	246
21-Jun	103	12	206
28-Jun	163	15	326

Average: 149.0 25.2 298.0

	<u>1st Week Views</u>	<u>Additional Views</u>	<u>ELCA Report*</u>	<u>8:30</u>	<u>10:30</u>	<u>Total</u>
5-Jul	99	40	198	22	11	33
12-Jul	109	16	218	15	8	23
19-Jul	95	19	190	18	12	30
26-Jul	105	11	188	12	14	26
	<u>1st Week Views</u>	<u>Additional Views</u>	<u>ELCA Report*</u>			<u>9:30!</u>
2-Aug	86	6	172			23
9-Aug	130	4	260			21
16-Aug	96	7	192			
23-Aug	107					
30-Aug						

Average: 103.4 10.7 206.8 16.8 11.3 26.0

\*For attendance reporting purposes, the ELCA has instructed us to multiply the 1<sup>st</sup> week views of our on-line worship by two. This assumes in many cases multiple people are watching the video together.

### Ways you can help make worship better...

- ... say yes when asked (or volunteer) to read a lesson for the video.
- ... come out and say "peace be with you" when PJ drives up and asks you to share the peace for his camera.
- ... join in the parish hymn sing each month (good singing not required).
- ... help deliver home communion bags.
- ... share the worship videos on social media with your friends and family.

## September & October Worship

### September 6 – "Best Of" HOILP Worship

Pastor Jeff has put together highlights of worship since March 15<sup>th</sup> and matched them with a fresh message from one of Bishop Clements' assistants.

### September 13 – Season of Creation Readings and Reflections

This service, which was developed at the retreat that Pastor Jeff led for the synod last January, was put together by PJ and his daughter Kim shortly after the pandemic began as a way to share Season of Creation with the synod. It has been adapted to give us a perfect introduction to Season of Creation this year.

### September 20 – Lutherans Restoring Creation: Creation Focused Worship

Pastor Jeff was recently nominated and chosen for this national committee which exists to keep the ELCA attentive to the plight of our planet. Among his first tasks with that committee was to lead a taskforce in producing a creation focused service that will be used on September 20<sup>th</sup> throughout the country. It includes well known Lutherans such as Bishop Eaton, hymn writer Marty Haugen, theologian Barbara Rossing, and author and pastor Lenny Randle. It also has a cameo of PJ sharing the peace to the country on behalf of HOILP.

### September 27 through October 18 – The Four Sundays of Season of Creation (A)

- September 27 – Forest & Tree Sunday
- October 4 – Land & Prairie Sunday
- October 11 – Wilderness Sunday
- October 18 – River & Stream Sunday

### October 25 – Reformation Sunday

As we do every year, we close the month of October commemorating the 95 statements that changed the church and world. This Sunday will include the rite of confirmation for Emily Lovett.

# WORSHIP

## HOILP Readers for September & October

	<i>First Lesson</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Second Lesson</i>
<b>September 6, 13, 20</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>September 27, 2020</b>	Cheryl Simpson	Randy Schlesinger & Sarah Goetz	Craig Ganz
<b>October 4, 2020</b>	Kristen Edecker	Diane Englehart & Sue Montgomery	Sandra Heiman
<b>October 11, 2020</b>	Holly Phalen	Sarah Pfeifer & Charlene Zimmerman	Kim Menzel
<b>October 18, 2020</b>	Jim Johnson	Olivia Ross & Rachel McCormick	Rita Thompson
<b>October 25, 2020</b>	Emily Lovett	Emily & Julie Lovett	Emily Lovett

## Parish Hymn Sing

You're invited to join in the Parish Hymn Sing for the Sept. 27 worship service. We're not able to sing when we gather together, but no one can stop us from singing when we're alone and combing our voices on the computer to sound like we're together!

The songs this month will be "O For 1000 Trees" (to the tune of ELW 886) and "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" (ELW 836). Email instructions will go out around September 12<sup>th</sup> and are also available by calling Debbie at the Immanuel office.



If it is easier for you to have PJ record you, just pop him a text or email.

The more voices the merrier!

## Pictures Needed

"Season of Creation" is on us once again. As in the past, we want pictures of each days theme to enhance our power point. Perhaps this year, as we use video as our primary medium for worship, the pictures are more important than ever. So please



submit your pictures to PJ ([photo.pastor1965@gmail.com](mailto:photo.pastor1965@gmail.com)) by Tuesday of the corresponding week. This year's Sundays are listed in the September/October worship schedule on page 2.

# CHURCH BUSINESS

### Immanuel Council Highlights – August 13, 2020

- General Treasury ending balance July 31, 2020 is \$10,692.32
- Suspension of in person worship services until after Labor Day.
- Allocation of Endowment Fund to PADS, MASS, Horizon House and Kreider Industries.
- Next council meeting September 17 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

*This month's benevolence offering is for  
Backpack Blessings*

### Immanuel Church Office Hours

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

*Debbie will be working from home in the afternoons. If you need anything, call or text: 815-866-6690 or email: [immanuel.lutheran.compton@live.com](mailto:immanuel.lutheran.compton@live.com).*

### September Joint Council

September 17, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.

*Immanuel council will have its monthly meeting following joint meeting*

## COMMUNICATION

Are you getting our emails about links to the worship video and other information? If not, we probably do not have your email or we have the wrong email for you. Please let either Debbie (Immanuel) or Kristen (First) know what your current email is.

What about text messages – are you getting them? That may be because we don't have your mobile number. Please consider sending that as well so we can use this means of communication also.

These means of communication become much more important now that we are unable to meet in person.

- Immanuel – [immanuel@lutherancompton.com](mailto:immanuel@lutherancompton.com)
- First – [flcinlee.com](http://flcinlee.com)

**\*\*\*Please know that HOILP will not share your personal information with outside organizations or individuals\*\*\***  
Our goal is to keep all communications lines open with you.

## OFFERINGS

Thank you to all who have made a point of sending in their offerings during this shelter in place period. Even though we aren't gathering, our pastor and staff are still working hard, and there are still utility bills and upkeep expenses to take care of with the buildings.

If you are a bit behind in your offerings since we haven't gathered for worship, please consider sending them in via mail or using an electronic means to donate.

Both congregations now have donation buttons on their websites through which you can use your credit or debit card to make your donations. If you'd like to give this way, you can use the QR codes below or go to [www.flcinlee.com](http://www.flcinlee.com) or [www.ilccompton.org](http://www.ilccompton.org).



First  
Lutheran



Immanuel  
Lutheran



Please note that HOILP has its own YouTube channel. You'll be able to see our current and past worship videos here. Please subscribe to this channel to stay up to date on our videos.

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

### Prayer Corner

Homebound – Joan Benner, Harold Schlesinger, Arlene Archer, Nathan Eich, Gene Williams, Marilyn Ward, Phyllis Larsen

Monthly Requests – Sharon Kellen, Whitley Clayton, Gary Holle, Ron Rebholz, Ed & Joan Benner

Affirmed in Baptism - (November 24, 2019) Cyndie Prodzenski, Caytlin Prodzenski, Shayne Prodzenski

Marriage – Chad Albers & Susan Hager (August 8, 2020)

Mourning Families - Jean Albert Family (9/9), Dorothy Burkart Family (9/13), Donna Albers Family (9/22), Lucy Nicholson Family (10/14), Paul Albers Family (11/26), Paul Betz Family (12/11), Peter Poterek Family (6/12)

Our Leaders - ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, NIS Bishop Jeffrey Clements, HOILP Pastor Jeff Schlesinger

### September Birthdays

2 – Bob Kromm  
3 – Eli Milus  
4 – Kelli Rosenkrans, Matt Jones, Laretta Collins  
6 – Rita Lilja, Sarah Pfeifer, Justin Albers, Beth Wohlrabe  
9 – Danika Mulcahy  
10 – Hannah Crumpton, Tylar Foster, Mason Hoadley, Dwight Bettner  
11 – Bryan Edecker  
12 – Brynn Honeycutt, Carson Honeycutt, Kendall Znaniecki, Sophia Martinez  
13 – Lisa Rosenkrans, William L. Poterek, Kevin Poterek  
15 – Ellwyn Parks, Deanne Phelps  
16 – Daryn Rosenkrans, Donna Hodge  
17 – Cash Joseph Spickerman  
18 – Bethany Simpson  
19 – Carol Kern, Laura Larabee, Kendyll Rebholz  
20 – Jackson Herbert  
22 – Linda Sellers  
24 – Kerri Fanning, Colleen Zinke, Alex Dolister Fox  
27 – Adam Betz, Greg Delhotal, Drew Winterton  
29 – Jennifer Hoelzer  
30 – Addyson Rebholz, Pastor Jeff, Whitley Clayton, Aubree Jones, Steve Simpson

### September Anniversaries

3 – Nick & Briana Ganz	18 – John & Jerrie Eich
10 – Gale & Christina Barnickel	19 – Kirk & Kathy Ross
11 – Ed & Jamie Giberson	21 – Roger & Marla Sommerville
14 – Jim & Julia Wade	Tony & Tanya Milus
16 – David & Tammy Bittner	24 – David & Alicia Nelson
Glen & Tami Fagerman	30 – Dan & Becky Sarver

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## SERVING OUR NEIGHBOR

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### N.I.C.E. Center Update

We continue to serve our needy each Saturday morning. We are well staffed and the parking lot distribution is very efficient.

Saturday mornings from 8:00-11:00 a.m. at N.I.C.E. would be a safe, social distancing, opportunity to drop-off our collected donations. Or, please notify Kristen Edecker or Debbie Rebholz if you have donations to be picked up and we will get our N.I.C.E. Board on it or leave them in the room next to the office at Immanuel.

### Diakonia Program

Want to learn more about your Christian faith in the Lutheran tradition? Want to be more effective as a servant of Christ to others? If your answer is "Yes!", the Northern Illinois Synod diakonia program may be for you.

Diakonia is a two-year program of theological education for adults who want to grow in their faith and discover new directions for putting your faith into practice. A series of 12 courses, each five weeks in length, covers topics such as the Daily Life of a Christian, the Old and New Testaments, Communicating the Gospel, Lutheran Confessions, and Christian Ethics. The courses do not have to be taken consecutively, so if you want to try any of them out, you're welcome to do so. Tuition and books costs are minimal, and financial aid is available for those who could not otherwise afford the program.

For 2020-2021, classes will begin online via Zoom platform. New students will have their choice of either Tuesday or Thursday evenings. If you are not familiar with Zoom we will provide help in managing it. Even when it is safe to resume in-person classes in some locations, we will continue to offer the program online.

Prospective students are invited to "test-drive" diakonia by "sitting in" on a class session or two this fall. Depending on the site, the first course will be an overview of either the Old Testament or the New Testament.

For more information and/or an application, contact the Northern Illinois Synod diakonia coordinator, Pastor Denise Rode, 815/756-8321 (evenings), or by email [drode1@niu.edu](mailto:drode1@niu.edu) or [pastor@immanuellearlville.org](mailto:pastor@immanuellearlville.org).

### Tuesday Tea Time – 3:00 p.m.

via **computer or smartphone** use this link:  
- <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82956300588>.  
via **phone**: dial (312) 626-6799 then when prompted enter meeting ID: 829 5630 0588

### HOILP Bountiful Gardens



Fellow Parish members: Bountiful garden collection dates are scheduled for Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>.

If you are unable to provide produce, please donate dry and canned good items. During phase 4 and to reduce contact with donations/supplies, we will not create food bags for delivery to the schools and deliver direct to the food pantries in Mendota and Lee. However, if you know of a specific person/family in need to which we can safely do same day delivery, please provide the name and address to Pastor Jeff. Thank You for helping the community and watch future services/newsletters for any updates.

John S. Hoelzer, Rita Thompson, Melissa Blum

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## WELCA

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**September WELCA Events have been cancelled for this month. Please watch for updates.**

**JUSTICE (Mission Action)** - Charlene Zimmerman

The Illinois Valley PADS in Peru is open 24/7 as of Aug. 15. The last 6 months they have been open 24/7 because of the pandemic and resulting joblessness. From Aug. 15, 2019-July 31, 2020 they served 349 clients (84 were children). They served 34,136 meals and have provided countless hours of case management which includes teaching life skills to help them obtain self-sufficiency. Classes are held in job seeking, basic computers, money management and life & parenting classes. **Their greatest needs are:**

**Paper towels, paper plates, drink mixes, individually packaged snacks, bathroom cleaning supplies, coffee, gift cards for fast food and gas. Please put these items in the totes in the room next to the office.**

Thank you to those that sewed the school bags and donated items. We have 150 school bags stuffed and ready to ship. And there are approx. 65 health kits ready also. **Thank You** to everyone for your donations to these projects.

**Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish  
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(First Lutheran - 240 W. Hardanger Gate - Lee, IL 60530)

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**Return Service Requested**

**SEPTEMBER WORSHIP  
SCHEDULE**

*Sundays – 9:30 a.m.*

*(whenever we resume “in-person worship”)*

September 6<sup>th</sup> – video only

September 13<sup>th</sup> – video only

September 20<sup>th</sup> – TBD

September 27<sup>th</sup> – TBD

*(whenever we resume “in-person worship”)*

Call Debbie at 815/539-6567 or email:

[immanuelutherancompton@live.com](mailto:immanuelutherancompton@live.com)

by 1:00 p.m. the Friday before that

Sunday if you plan to attend.

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You can also check us out on Facebook!