

The Image

"The MISSION of Immanuel is to glorify God, build the Christian Church, foster Christian fellowship and concern, and join in the worldwide work of winning souls for Christ."



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK – FEBRUARY 2023



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Very recently, the daily lectionary directed me to this passage from Ezekiel:

So you, son of man, I have made a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me. If I say to the wicked, O wicked one, you shall surely die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked to turn from his way, that wicked person shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the wicked to turn from his way, and he does not turn from his way, that person shall die in his iniquity, but you will have delivered your soul (Ezekiel 33:7-9).

This keeps me up at night. As does this: “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you” Hebrews 13:17.

These texts are often read at ordinations. They are stark reminders to the man being ordained (as they are to me) of exactly what work the pastor is to do. And for that work the pastor is accountable to God. Maybe this explains why I’m grouchy at times! You see, pastors have a very specific job. And that job is to protect you. He is (I am) here to protect you from Satan and from yourself.

First, let’s talk about Satan. He hates everything about what happens in our church and the fruit that the church brings forth in your lives. He seeks to destroy the church and her offspring, as Revelation tells us: “Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus” (Revelation 12:17). The woman is the church, and her offspring are you and me. Satan, as a fallen angel, has been around for a

very long time. He and his demons are not God; they are not omniscient and omnipotent, but they are knowledgeable about you, me, and our weaknesses—and how to exploit them. And they are powerful. I think this is one of the reasons that peace in the church is so fleeting. We are constantly under attack in one way or another. One of my jobs as pastor is to be aware of that—to try to discern how it is the evil one might be attempting to get a foothold inside the door. This is one of the reasons men like me, and churches like ours, are so slow to change anything. We are constantly praying and trying to discern how even little changes might affect future generations. And we are painfully aware that change, even divisive and destructive change, is very difficult to undo.

Ponder that for a moment. Think about something that has changed in the church since you were a child. Has that change resulted in a difference in the way the Gospel is taught and perceived? How Christ is taught and perceived? I have taught how the removal of a comma from an influential translation of Scripture in the last century has led, in no small part, to the “I’m spiritual but not religious” crowd (aka the “I don’t need to go to church and hear from the one called to teach” crowd).¹

Sometimes, it seems they are small and innocuous things that pastors say no to. But think about it from the pastor’s perspective. How can we see the long-term effects of what appears to be nothing to us? I hope you can begin to see our hesitancy. And you, dear laity, have the duty and responsibility to do the same when I propose a change. At a minimum, you should expect me to have discussed the matter with the other pastors in the circuit. There is a reason we, pastors, are required to meet every month: to be accountable to and to benefit from the wisdom of our peers. The Lord gives us this warning through St. Peter:

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world” (1 Peter 5:8-9).

Now, let’s talk about you. Very quickly pastors realize there are many voices competing for their people’s attention. Some are good. Some are bad. Some are evil. One thing we need to recognize right out of the box is that we are still under that curse of Satan. Those words he spoke to Eve and Adam still lurk in our minds: “*Did God actually say...*” (Genesis 3:1). And remember the false promise he added to that: “*...your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*” (Genesis 3:5). We must realize that when I speak to you as your pastor, your sinful inclination (going all the way back to Eve) is to, in god-like fashion, avow or disavow what I am saying. Now that’s not all bad. And the Lord uses that skepticism by urging you to search His Word and see if the pastor is indeed speaking the Truth to you. This is one of the tools He gives you to discern false preachers in your midst. Do you do that? When I say something you don’t like, do you go and check the Word and the context? Or do you simply disavow the Word you find unpalatable? Of course, if you do go and check, and you find I have not misspoken or falsely taught, you then realize the problem is with you. You can see our hesitancy to the truth. It’s our “default” way of thinking as fallen creatures. We want to believe what we want. And, unless we study, we can easily find mouths to whisper in our ears whatever we wish to believe. St. Paul warns Timothy of this:

¹ Here are two translations of Ephesians 4:11-12. The underlined portion is that which I desire to highlight. The first is from the ESV (published in 2001 and based heavily on the RSV published in 1971): “*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...*”

Now here’s the KJV (published in 1611) of the same text: “*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...*” Do you see how the modern translation has omitted a comma? And do you see how this omission changes the meaning of the phrase? Granted, the original Greek lacks punctuation. However, the context of Ephesians 4 makes it clear that what is being described are the various tasks required of the offices Christ gives to His church. These offices described in Ephesians do the work of the ministry, not the people. In the twentieth century, a strong anti-cleric sentiment grew in the church-at-large which led to the deletion of the comma. Such a small thing has led to so many troublesome issues in the church-at-large. Please feel free to ask me if you would like to learn more on this.

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry (2 Timothy 4:3-5).

As the Lord commanded Ezekiel, so I too must warn you of those things. I have to remind you (and myself) of the forces—sometimes within our own hearts—that seek to lead us away from Christ. Remember, that's the goal of Satan and our own sinful hearts. And yes, that can make me seem grumpy. But as your parents once told you: It's for your own good.

And it is exactly what my ordination requires me to do.

See you in church.

Rev. Leonard A. Astrowski Jr., Pastor

FROM THE ELDERS –

Newsletter

THIS IS THE SECOND E-MAILING OF THE IMAGE!! IT HAS BEEN EMAILED TO THOSE WHO HAVE PROVIDED EMAIL ADDRESSES. THOSE WHO HAVE REQUESTED A MAILED COPY WILL STILL RECEIVE IT. THERE WILL ALSO BE COPIES AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX ALONG WITH MONTHLY CALENDARS. THE "FROM" ADDRESS WILL BE IMAGE.ILCHURCH@GMAIL.COM. PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU ADD THIS TO YOUR CONTACTS SO THAT IT WILL GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR INBOX AND NOT TO "SPAM".

Thank You!!



**CHURCH
OFFICE**

We have an addition to our church office staff! Christine Roth will be working one day per week (generally Thursdays). Tammy will be here the other four working days. The office hours will remain 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Please welcome Chris to her new role!

Thanks!

THE DATE OF THE VOTERS MEETING HAS BEEN SET! IT WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12TH AFTER CHURCH SERVICES. The 2023 Budget will be ready to vote on at that time. If you have any questions, please contact Ron Mau. THE AGENDA WILL BE SENT OUT AHEAD OF THE MEETING.



The start date for the asbestos abatement in the cafeteria will be Monday, January 30th. This is expected to last approximately 5 days. The cafeteria will be tented, and the abatement company will be using the gym to set up their equipment. It is advised that no one be in the kitchen or anywhere in the south hallway of the educational wing during this time.

After the abatement is completed, the new flooring will be installed in the cafeteria but we do not yet have a date for that. We will continue to keep everyone updated!

If you have any questions, please contact Clayton Weisenborn.

Thank You,

– Clayton Weisenborn, Property Committee Chairman

Below are the total offering and expenses for the last three months.

We thank you for your continued generosity through this difficult time.

October Offerings - \$16,066.00	October Expenses - \$20,264.00
Nov. Offerings - \$25,260.00	Nov. Expenses - \$20,749.00
Dec. Offerings - \$17,866.00	Dec. Expenses - \$23,866.00

We ask God for His blessing upon all our members, especially those who celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this month including:

February 2: Angela Anders
 February 3: Mackenzie Corwin
 (2), Tom Klockau,
 JoAnn Taube
 February 4: Ardo Holmgrain,
 Janice Roti
 February 8: Sandra Eagle
 February 10: Brian Luebbe,
 Klaus Mark
 February 11: Samantha Titus

February 12: Daniel Tiece (5)
 February 13: Tom Esparza
 February 15: Elijah Reese,
 Kaylee Schelfaut
 February 19: Haley Gruner,
 Debbie Rusk
 February 20: Orion Stambaugh
 February 21: Judy Bateman,
 Dorothy Luebbe
 February 22: Pam Saunders

February 25: Carolyn Fowler
 February 26: Leigh Ayers
 February 27: Deanna Wilson



Jeffrey & Deborah Rusk – February 2, 1994

****NOTE – Birthdays and Anniversaries are listed to the best of our records. If you find a mistake or any missing information, please notify the office. Thank You!***



Mark Your Calendars:

Feb 23 - LWML meeting 6pm in Luther Room
 March 8 – serve Lenten meal
 March 30 – serve at Christian Care
 April 27 – LWML meeting
 May 25 – Out to eat and Election of Officers



Date: June 22–25, 2023

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Theme: Celebrate the Lord of the Nations

Scripture Verse: *Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man (Psalm 33:12–13).*

Goal Statement: As His children, we celebrate the Lord of the nations.

Objectives: Convention attendees, understanding that we are all His children, will:

- Celebrate our Lord through Word and Sacrament.
- Honor God by serving our neighbors.
- Proclaim His message to the nations.

Convention documents and special events information can be found by going to the following link:

<https://www.lwml.org/2023-convention>



Immanuel Youth Group News – Rock Island Circuit Youth Group

February 2023

HIGHER THINGS LOCK-IN

The Apostles Creed- RETREAT IN A BOX

When: February 24th-25th

Where: Concordia Lutheran Church

Cost: \$15 per person to cover the cost of the retreat materials and Pizza!

(checks made out to Concordia Lutheran Church and due upon arrival)

What to bring:

- Any snacks to share
- favorite ice cream toppings
- sleeping bags and sleeping materials.
- board games, art materials etc., for free time.

Please see any of your Youth Group advisors for more details and an itinerary of this event.

***If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Welch at
309-714-5491.***

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2023

The Board of Education is making plans for Vacation Bible School this summer for children entering Pre-K thru 5th grade. We are considering changing to a 5 day format with meetings in the evenings. Dates will be determined soon. First we would like to gather names of children interested in attending and adults willing to assist with VBS. Please use the VBS sign-up sheet in the narthex to provide your name, contact telephone number, email.

Thank you,

The Board of Education:

Burnie Eckardt

Helen Vogel

Carrie Werke

Leigh Ann Nixon

Kathy Welch

Pastor Astrowski



All adults and youth are invited to participate in any or all Bible studies offered at Immanuel. We are thankful we can gather together around God's Word. You are welcome to attend anytime.



CHURCH OFFICE INFORMATION

- **Sunday morning Adult Bible class** – 8:00 am and 10:15 am in the Library or on Zoom.
 - **Adult Bible study** – Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am in the Library or on Zoom.
 - **Intergenerational Studies:** 6 pm each Tuesday evening.
 - **For the older youth,** there is a Youth Group meeting on Sunday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Meetings are held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Island. The first hour includes an opening, devotion and education time with Pastor Astrowski.
 - And of course for the younger ones, there is Sunday School at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings.
- Please call the office when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound (309-786-3391).
 - Please use this email to contact the office: ilchurch@mchsi.com
 - Website address – www.immanuelri.org
 - Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Immanuel-Lutheran-Church-Rock-Island-IL-LCMS-179175395513226/> All Sunday services are 'Live' streamed at 9 am and posted to our church's YouTube channel (the link is available on the church's website).

Reminder... each time you enter the hospital, be sure to say you are a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island. According to the laws, the hospital needs to ask each time you come for a procedure. If you would like the pastor to know immediately, please have a family member or friend call the office and/or Pastor—otherwise we may not be aware of your hospitalization. Also, unless requested otherwise, members of the church will be prayed for using their first and last names.



Don't Replace "And" with "Or"

We've all heard that stewardship means giving to the church of our time, talents and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money, but about our whole lives. As we confess in the Small Catechism's explanation of the First Article of the Apostle's Creed, God gives us everything we have and enjoy. First we confess that God gives us "our body and soul, our eyes, ears, and all our members, our reason and all our senses" (SC II). Then we confess that He gives us material things. The time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all three of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have, and indeed, everything we are, comes from God's fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word — when we replace the word and with the word or. It is always written with the and, but when we read it, we read it with the or. Thus this quite helpful trinity, which extolls that everything that we have and are is a gift from God, to be given back in service of His church, turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose from when we serve God. The giving of our time, talents and treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents or treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasure? Or perhaps it is the other way round: Can we give of our treasure and not of our time and talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is,

can we give of our time and talents in addition to our treasure? Yes, indeed, we are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. Rather, they are given to us, and we are to press them all into God's service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus, we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ's holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

For God has provided all these things for us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents AND treasure as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings with which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents and treasure to our families, our society, our church and our local congregations. And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price: the holy, precious blood and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything — His time, His talents and His treasure — to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God.

Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love — time, talents and treasure together.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry:
lcms.org/stewardship

Christ the King (Cristo Rey) Lutheran Church



1301-19th Street, East Moline, IL 61244

E-mail: cristorey-em@sbcglobal.net

Ph. (309) 738-6124

Rev. Pablo G. Domínguez



February 2023

Always Move Forward.



We all agree that making New Year's resolutions is easy. The big deal is to complete them.

On New Year's we made our resolutions or goals. The most

common were save money, quit smoking, find a better job, eat

healthier, lose weight, exercise, etc. etc. One month has passed very quickly. Right?

Were your resolutions just thoughts, or are they just posted as refrigerator notes?

Are you still working to achieve your resolutions? We all know that achieving your goals isn't easy, but if your efforts are improving every day, Hurrah! Good for you!

If you made resolutions in the religious field, what would your goals be for 2023?

I met people in 2022 who promised to come to church because their troubles were satisfactorily addressed by God. They said, "God has heard my prayers, so now I promise to serve Him." After a few weeks, these people disappear.

What do you think? Why didn't they complete their religious goals just as many people didn't complete their secular goals? As I have said many times before, if all these people stayed with the church, we would need more space and more worship services.

Keep in mind that as worshipers of the living God, and thanks to the Holy Spirit, our goal is very clear.

We understand the words in Hebrews 12:1b-2a: *And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.*

As a God's people we know what our goal is for this year and for the years to come: do not

neglect our faith and relationship with Jesus. With grateful hearts we don't forget what Jesus has done for us. He has given us forgiveness and eternal salvation.

If you are still running and "*fixing your eyes on Jesus*", Hurrah! Good for you!

Rock Island Circuit Hispanic Council. This Council is comprised of people interested in

Hispanic ministry from the LCMS congregations of the Rock Island Circuit. We extend an

invitation to anyone who is interested in reaching out to the Hispanic population to join us. Please call and join us (309)738-6124



for Lutherans®

Hispanic mission.

Choice Dollars. Christ the King Lutheran Church (Cristo Rey) has been enrolled as a participating organization in Thrivent Choice which is a charitable grant

program of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. You are able to direct your Choice Dollars now to our

Comments:

We have already used the new Spanish Lutheran Hymnal several times as we familiarize ourselves with it. We are using them twice per month. We continue to struggle with the use of it. Some say it is confusing. I think we just need to get use to them.

I have sent emails and tried to call the manager of the radio station, KALA, about a Spanish broadcast, but unfortunately there has been no response as yet.

In early December I sent Christmas cards to members, contacts and friends of CR. Inside these cards, members and contacts also received an invitation to participate in our special worships on the days of Dec. 24th, 25th, 31st. and 1st January, 2023

Dec. 15. Christmas event at East Moline Correctional Center. As I told you in my last report, a musical group composed of inmates, played Spanish Christmas songs and hymns at this event. I read from the Bible and delivered a Christmas message. About 30 Hispanics attended. Thank you, God, for this wonderful opportunity to witness. Let's see now how many show up for our regular Thursday Bible studies.

FB Live continues on Mondays and Fridays at 4:00 pm.

***We continue to thank God for your faithful prayers and loving support
of this Hispanic ministry!***



OUR CURRENT NEEDS:

- Paper Towels
- Cleaning Supplies
- Laundry Detergent
- Butter
- Sugar
- Onions
- Hats & Gloves
- Ziplock Bags
- Men's Winter Coats
- Trash Bags (39 Gal/13 Gal)
- Hygiene Products
 - I.E.: Shampoo/Conditioner, razors, body wash, deodorant, foot powder, shaving cream)
- Shower Shoes/Flip Flops (sizes 9, 10, 11, 12, 13)
- Thermal Underwear
- Perishables and Non-Perishable Goods
- Men's Sweatshirts, Sweatpants, Jeans

*Please drop off items to the designated box in the narthex and they will be taken to Christian Care by one of our members.
Contact the office if you have any questions.*









February 2023

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

3300 24th St. Rock Island, IL 61201-6212

Office Phone: (309) 786-3391

Website: Immanuelri.org

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 9-11 CHALK	2 	3	4 Calendar subject to change. Any changes will be listed in weekly announcements.
5 Bd. Of Elders 7:15 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:15 am Bible Study/SS	6 8 am – 4 pm RICC 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL 6:00 pm Book Club	7 9:00 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen. Bible Study 7 pm Jr. Confirmation 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL	8 9-11 CHALK	9 	10	11 
12 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:15 am VOTERS Mtg 10:15 am SS	13 8 am – 4 pm RICC 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL 6:00 pm Book Club	14 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen. Bible Study 7 pm Jr. Confirmation 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL	15 9-11 CHALK	16	17 Deadline for submitting information for the March Image	18
19 9:00am Worship w/HC 10:15 am Bible Study/SS	20 OFFICE CLOSED – President's Day 8 am – 4 pm RICC 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL 6:00 pm Book Club	21 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen. Bible Study 7 pm Jr. Confirmation 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL	22  9-11 CHALK 6:30 pm Divine Service Ash Wednesday	23 6 pm LWML Mtg. – Luther Room	24 Higher Things In A Box – Youth Outing – Concordia Geneseo	25
26 9:00am Worship w/HC 10:15 am Bible Study/SS	27 8 am – 4 pm RICC 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL 6:00 pm Book Club	28 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen. Bible Study 7 pm Jr. Confirmation 5:30 – 7 pm FUTBOL				



THE IMAGE is the monthly newsletter published for members and friends of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3300 24th St., Rock Island, Illinois. Immanuel is a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Sunday Schedule

Bible Study at 8:00 AM
Worship Service with Holy Communion at 9:00 AM
Bible Study at 10:15 AM
Sunday School at 10:15 AM

We invite you to join us for worship and Bible Study and the fellowship of Christians who share in the joy of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Rev. Leonard A. Astrowski, Jr.
Organists: Christine Roth and Katherine Cobert

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Our Website: Immanuelri.org

Church Office Phone: 309-786-3391

Pastor Astrowski's Phone: 989-326-0199

Email addresses:

Pastor Astrowski: pastrowski@gmail.com

Church Office (Tammy): ilchurch@mchsi.com