

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 2025



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Then I said, "Ab, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD."

Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."¹

It's been many years since I could make the claim that I am only a youth. Two decades have passed since hands were laid on me and the mark of the Office of Holy Ministry was draped over my shoulders. The stole was placed around my neck as that symbol, that mark. It is meant to symbolize a yoke. We, the men called² to the Office, are yoked to the Word of God. We are called to speak what He would have us say. All of this is, of course, for you. We pastors, as we head down the path to our ordination, know academically the requirements of the Office. As the years in the Office pass however, its weight becomes an increasingly heavy reality. In short, the price of the Office is high.

O LORD, you have deceived me, and I was deceived; you are stronger than I, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all the day; everyone mocks me. For whenever I speak, I cry out, I shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the LORD has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. If I say, "I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name," there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. For I hear many whispering. Terror is on every side! "Denounce him! Let us denounce him!"

¹ Jeremiah 1:6-10, English Standard Version.

² Scripture is quite clear that only men can occupy the Office. This may be a hard truth for you to grasp and submit to, but it remains the truth regardless of how we think of it. Contrary to popular contemporary sentiment, truth is not altered by what we wish it to be.

say all my close friends, watching for my fall. "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we can overcome him and take our revenge on him."³

Jeremiah, after speaking God's Word, offers this lament. And this lament resonates with us pastors as we live in the Office our God has called us to occupy. We embark joyfully, and then reality creeps in. We realize that our families also pay a high price.⁴ I am installed into the Office and immediately immersed in the life of the parish. Meetings and visits, teaching and preaching allow us men to learn quickly of the community and to begin building relationships. We are immersed in our work. Yet our families have followed us and found themselves strangers in a strange community. This is particularly hard on our children. They try to form friendships with their peers, with others that have already formed deep friendships and have lived among each other since birth. It is a difficult task for a child to break into an already formed group and be accepted. And they carry the burden of hearing the charitable and uncharitable comments of their father's gifts and shortcomings. Children, in the innocence of their age, are quick to share the conversations their parents have at the dinner table. And, as you might expect, the pastor's kids are expected by many to be holier than their peers. "But you're the pastor's kid..." So goes the refrain of accusation. I remind everyone that I am the only one who took the ordination vows. I am called to the Office, not my family. Sadly, it is common that pastors' children drift from our churches. Sad, but not surprising. They pay a high price.

And then there is the loneliness that creeps in at times—especially during the holy seasons of the church year. We are sent far from our childhood communities and extended families. The loud, laughter-filled gatherings of family at Christmas and Easter become a thing of the past. We hear of our families' games and food and Thanksgiving football games. But duty, distance, and the expense of travel preclude our sharing of those times with those closest to us. This might seem odd, but for the pastor that might be a strange blessing. As we ever grow in our knowledge of Scripture, the teachings of the ancient church, and the Truth, we become increasingly isolated. Awkward conversations and questions demand, no matter how tactfully presented, truthful answers. And these answers often drive a wedge between us and our own families.

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."⁵

Our Lord teaches us exactly what we might expect as we proclaim and live the Gospel Truth. We can expect to pay a high price. And there are more costs than just those borne by our families.

At seminary, we were cautioned about having close friends in the parish. I found that bit of counsel somewhat puzzling. We pastors tend to be men who enjoy human relationships. Our lives are spent in study and sharing the gift of knowledge with those around us. The excitement of following the grammar and history of the words the Lord gives us, to see the organic whole of Scripture and the Christ shining through each page like a brilliant beacon of light, is a delight to share. We think, breathe, proclaim, and by God's grace, live His Word. It occupies every fiber of our being. Our lives are nothing less than sermons. The Word is always there, in our thoughts, making connections to the world around us. And this becomes all we know. It becomes who we are. And that becomes rather tiresome, I suppose, for those close to us—to listen to a man who looks—and finds—eternal truths manifest in the most mundane aspects of life.

³ Jeremiah 20:7-10, English Standard Version.

⁴ Within the first five years of my Ordination, about ten percent of my classmates' marriages had failed.

⁵ Matthew 10:34-39, English Standard Version.

And then there are all the truths derived from the Holy Word. We speak of politics and politicians, social issues, and how we are to live and love as God's people. Alongside these things is the ever-present cajoling, however gentle, of ourselves and those around us to live and speak the Truth. To remind those around us of our duty to speak the Truth to those placed in our paths. And to remind people of the cost of discipleship. And that cost is high. I suppose it frightens many away, or angers them, or bores those cemented in their opinions no matter how far adrift they might be from the Truth of God's Word. Nobody likes to be told they might be wrong. Whatever the reason, for who can know another's heart, the end is those once close by creep away.

When those "awkward" situations arise, when a friend must be confronted by the man, though he be friend, who is always in the Office. Smiles become strained, and periods of silence grow until the bond of friendship is strained and bent, if not broken. People once close move off, sometimes to other confessions that require less allegiance to the Truth. People who once knelt before the Lord's altar and said the words we all say turn away with seemingly little thought of the Word and people they are walking away from. So many empty words get spoken: "Yes, Pastor, I really need to be there. I need to hear, I need to learn." Yet there is no coming and hearing, no learning and growing. Words quickly spoken fail to result in action. Yes, the price is high.

And often, lonely is the way. We are often afterthoughts in people's lives and dismissed as anachronisms. We and our teaching are looked upon as odd museum pieces—relics of a church and doctrine that refuse to keep up with the times.⁶

The man in the Office prays and looks into the mirror and sees his failure to teach more, to preach better, to speak more forcefully, and to face the isolation the Office brings. He knows he will never be up to the task and must daily appeal to God for mercy in the face of the weak use of His gifts—His Word.

And of course, sin is ever present. Mine and yours. Personality conflicts, criticisms, our listening to the wrong voices, our seeking comfort over the Truth—these drive wedges between us and stop up our ears to the voice of God spoken in His Word.

The price is indeed high.

So why do we pastors do it?

First, we are called. And it is a call from God. We are called from whatever our former lives⁷ were to the vocation of pastor. It is a Divine Call that brings with it a deep sense of duty and responsibility. Many might not understand that, and I suppose that unless you occupy the Office, that is simply so. Perhaps if you think of your children, that might shed some light on the call. Raising a family is hard. It always has been—read Scripture if you're unsure of that. And in our world, with so many terrible distractions and devices, it is more so. Yet you, parent, face that difficulty and ply your way through because you have been called to do so. When times are very hard, there are the sinful temptations to just walk away. But you don't. You know what your duty is. And you know your failures—the "should haves" that haunt all parents. But you tough it out knowing what might happen if you abandon your post. And you carry on because you truly love those creatures that are sometimes rather unlovable.

And so it is with the Office of Holy Ministry. We carry on in that Office, for we love the people we serve. It is a deep thing—which might help shed some light on the hurt we men experience when those we love leave us. Yes, there is a deep love of the Pastor for his people—you.

Finally, there is the Glorious Gift: to be given, with our many faults and weaknesses, the privilege to proclaim the whole truth of Scripture—to proclaim Christ and Him crucified. We know, whether people like it or not, they need what we have. So

⁶ I have often heard that "the Missouri Synod won't grow unless it changes..." with the change being an altering of any number of doctrines that the culture finds offensive.

⁷ My class included former sailors and lab workers like me, former CEO's, business owners, medical doctors, former fighter pilots and submarine commanders, undertakers, teachers, law-enforcement officers, and many others. And most of us were (and are) husbands and fathers.

God speaks, so we speak. And there is the great joy a man receives as he watches a face light up as the Good News is spoken to the people he serves. To see the relief in a person's eyes as blessed absolution is pronounced to them. To speak the unbroken promises of God to a hurting, broken, and dying people—that is a great gift. And that is the joy of doing what we do. It is this gift that makes the high price a thing worth paying.

In the end the church is not judged by results—at least results we can easily measure. The church, and by extension the pastors who serve her, will be judged according to their faithfulness. This is the task: to be faithful to His Word. So the admonishment of our Lord: *“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.”*⁸

This is echoed by St. Paul: *“This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.”*⁹ So go the priests, so go the people.

I pray the Lord bless the Office and the people this Office serves by offering, each week, in season and out, the blessed Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In Christ's most Holy Name,

Rev. L.A. Astrowski Jr., Pastor

⁸ Matthew 24:45-46, English Standard Version.

⁹ 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, English Standard Version.



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

- **Sunday Adult Bible class** – 10:30 am in the Luther Room.
- **Sunday School** – 10:30 am in Peter and Mark rooms.
- **Adult Bible Study** – Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am in Luther Room or on Zoom.
- **Intergenerational Studies** – Tuesdays at 6:00 pm, Zoom only.
- **For the older youth** – there is a Rock Island Circuit Youth Group. Watch for announcements on dates and times.



Reminder... each time you enter the hospital, be sure to say you are a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island so that the hospital can inform the church. ***If you would like 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. The hospitals do not regularly call the churches as they once did.***

Please call the office when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound: **(309-786-3391)**.

Please use this email to contact the office: officeimmanuelri@gmail.com.

As a reminder – we are still recycling aluminum cans. There is a white barrel outside of the kitchen door – west side of the building. Please place your aluminum cans in the barrel and they will be taken to be recycled. The money is then used to purchase gas for the mower at the church. **Thank You.**





Immanuel LWML Officers for 2024/2025 are:

- Janet Mau: President
- Laurie Astrowski: Vice President
- Helen Vogel: Secretary
- Karlene Campbell: Treasurer

The Lutheran Women in Missions (LWML) invites you to participate! Here is an update and a calendar of events. To grow in our faith and joy, Pastor will be providing a more in-depth Bible Study instead of a devotion on the 4th Thursday of the month starting in October. We will have just three business meetings for the year and the election of officers in May.

To learn more about the missions our mites are going to, we will share a “Mission Minute” at each business meetings. You will see that we have two dates to serve at Christian Care Men’s shelter. If you have never served, I would love to see more people get the opportunity. It is a rewarding experience and reminds you how blessed you are. We have the fleece purchased for Phil’s Friends blankets and will again do that after Christmas.

Please come and join us. Our goal is to still to be respectful of your time. The meetings start at 6 pm with refreshments in the Luther Room. Our goal is to be done no later than 7:30. These dates are subject to change but is the plan!

February 16th – Fleece Blankets Available

February 27 – Bible Study and Dessert

March 9 – Mite Box Sunday – Return Fleece Blankets

March 20 – Serve at Christian Care

March 27 – Bible Study and Dessert – Business Meeting

April 2 – Serve Lenten Dinner

April 20 - Easter

April 24 – Bible Study and Dessert

May 22 – Dinner Out and Election officers

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THE 2025 FLOWER CHART and **THE ETERNAL LIGHT CHART** is posted in the Narthex. The cost for Altar Flowers (two vases) is \$30.00 and for Eternal Light is \$10.00. If you sign up, please be sure to check the calendar periodically for the date(s) you signed to donate.



****PLEASE WRITE OUT ON THE FORM WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE PRINTED IN THE ANNOUNCEMENTS, OR EMAIL THE INFO TO OFFICEIMMANUELRI@GMAIL.COM. YOU CAN ALSO WRITE A NOTE AND LEAVE IT IN THE OFFERING PLATE FOR THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

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YOUTH GROUP UPCOMING EVENTS

Regular Youth Meetings at Immanuel Rock Island

- All Circuit youth are welcome to attend the regularly scheduled Youth Group meetings at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Island.
 - Meeting schedule - First hour: Pastor leads a Bible Study, Second hour: games and snacks.
 - Future meeting dates will be shared via email at the beginning of each month for your reference and monthly planning.
 - Please join us!
 - **Sunday, February 2 – 5:30 pm**
Immanuel Youth Group
 - **Sunday, February 23 – 2:00 pm**
Rock Island LCMS Circuit Youth Group Outing
 - **Higher Things 2025**
July 29 – August 1, Cedar Point, Sandusky Ohio
-

Martin + Katie
CONFERENCE

Hello.

Registration is now
OPEN!

martinpluskatie.org
29 March 2025
University Lutheran Church
Champaign, Illinois

Lutheran fellowship for young adults

Join us for the 2025 Martin+Katie Conference at University Lutheran Church in Champaign, IL on Saturday, March 29, 2025. At this free conference, grow as Christian men and women, meet new friends, get to know each other, and have fun. The conference is open to ages 18–30. Married or single are welcome. Registration is required, as capacity is limited. Please register no later than Friday, March 21st. Info and registration are available at <http://martinpluskatie.org>.
Plus: Extra bonus activities planned for Friday night, March 28, and Saturday night, March 29! All are invited to stay for Sunday Bible Class, Divine Service, and lunch on Sunday, March 30.



**TRIVIA NIGHT
SPONSORED BY OUR
YOUTH GROUP**

**Join in the fun night of Trivia to benefit the
Immanuel Lutheran Youth Group**

Saturday, February 22

6:00 pm (doors open at 5:30 pm)

**The night will feature 10 rounds of Trivia,
A fabulous Silent Auction,
and a delicious Bake Sale.**

\$80 a table/8 persons per table

**Reserve a table by using sign-up sheet in
Narthex, calling the church office, texting Helen
Vogel at 390-781-9627, or email
Helen.vogel.66@gmail.com**

Ways you can help:

- **Reserve a table**
 - **Donate baked goods**
 - **Put together a Silent Auction Basket**
- (Please use sign-up sheet on Narthex table
if you can help in any of these ways)***

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

*We ask God for His blessing upon all our members, especially those who
Celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this month*



2 nd – Angela Anders	16 th - Lailey Herrera
3 rd - Tom Klockau	17 th - Luca Fiedler
JoAnn Taube	19 th - Haley Gruner
4 th - Janice Roti	Debbie Rusk
10 th - Brian Luebbe	21 st - Judy Bateman
Mark Klaus	Dorothy Luebbe
11 th - Samantha Titus	22 nd - Brandon Heriford
12 th - Daniel Triage	Pam Saunders
14 th - Travis Leeson	Steve Walker
15 th - Elijah Reese	25 th - Carolyn Fowler
Kaylee Schelfaut	26 th - Leigh Ayers
	27 th - Deanna Wilson



February 2, 1994 – Jeff & Deborah Rusk

- ****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

Membership Changes: (none)

Changes to current directory: (none)

Memorials Received in January: Kathy Nelson in Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Fred Benson

PREGNANCY RESOURCES

BABY BOTTLE BOOMERANG!



- **Help continue Pregnancy Resources' *Legacy of Life***
 - **Grab a Bottle in the Narthex, and fill it up with your monetary donation!**
 - **Please return filled bottles by the end of February**
- THANK YOU!**
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**CENTRAL ILLINOIS
DISTRICT**
of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

FEBRUARY 2025 MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE

Week of February 2, 2025

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Week of February 9, 2025

1 Chronicles 16:25–26

For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.

Week of February 16, 2025

Numbers 23:19

God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Week of February 23, 2025

Deuteronomy 31:6

Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.

Men's Deodorant
Shampoo
Conditioner
13-gal Trash bags
33 gal trash bags

39 gallon lawn and leaf trash bags
Toilet paper
Men's disposable razors
Napkins
Deodorant

Please place items in the Christian Care box in the Narthex. Items will be taken to Christian Care.



2025 ILLINOIS MARCH FOR LIFE IN SPRINGFIELD

The 2025 Illinois March for Life is **Tuesday, March 25th** in Springfield.

The rally begins at 1:00 pm and the March is at 2:00 pm..

Central Illinois District News: Dollars for Missions

The current Dollar for Missions project is \$25,000 for masonry work and repointing at University Lutheran Church in Champaign. The church and student center building serves as an outpost of the Gospel to the 60,000 students annually at the University of Illinois. Portions of the brick and concrete structure are showing their age and are in need of repair. This project will fund targeted work at repairing and repointing sections of the building exterior, so that the Lord's Word and Sacraments can continue to be given out for many decades to come!

The Camp CILCA Lowdown - February, 2025

217-487-7497 / camp@cilca.org
4124 Camp Cilca Rd.
Cantrall, IL 62625



SAVE THE DATE:

❖ *Act Like Men Woodcutters:* Feb 28-March 1

- Cutting trees, splitting wood, fellowship with other men, good food, and time in God's Word are all great ways to get started in this endeavor. You do not have to be skilled in using a chainsaw, hammer, or tractor to come to this event. Strong backs and eager hands are just as helpful. The study sessions will cover topics relevant to men navigating life in the modern age.

❖ *Pancake Lunch:* March 15

- Absolutely FREE! 10am-1pm. This is a “thank you” from Camp CILCA to you, our wonderful community of campers, donors, and volunteers.

❖ *Women's Retreat:* March 28-29

❖ *Annual Banquet:* March 30

- Sunday, March 30, 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
At Camp CILCA's Dining Hall! Tickets are \$40 each. Call the camp office (217-487-7497) or email (camp@cilca.org) to reserve your tickets today!
The Annual Banquet is an evening celebrating God's work of *Creation* and *Redemption*, especially as those works are enjoyed, proclaimed, and taught at Camp CILCA. Join us for an evening of music, food, great speakers, and friends.

This year, Executive Director at Camp Concordia, Pastor BJ Fouts will be our speaker. Special Music from 5:00-5:30pm.

Camp CILCA exists to strengthen and foster faith in Jesus Christ and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting.

2025 marks 75 years of outdoor ministry! To celebrate this blessed anniversary, Camp CILCA will be offering every week of camp to all campers for just **\$75!** Registration will open November 1, so sign up early to secure your spot.

A REMINDER:

ALL Summer programs in 2025 are only \$75 in honor of CILCA's 75th Anniversary.

Registrations are coming in much faster than usual and space is limited, so you are encouraged to register soon.

Camp CILCA Women's Retreat – March 28-29, 2025 - “Lean and Learn.”

Join us as we **lean** into God's Word, digging into what God says to us, and **learn** how we live it out in our daily vocation as women.

Two Retreat options:

- 1 – Join us overnight for \$100 and share a room with two other ladies in Camp CILCA's Christian Growth Center
2. Select the day-only option for \$75. Register online at www.cilca.org/women's-retreat. Questions: contact Lauren at program@cilca.org

SUMMER PROGRAMS 2025

The Central Illinois Lutheran Camp Association (CILCA) exists to foster and strengthen faith in Jesus Christ and fellowship with others in a unique outdoor setting. CILCA strives to reconnect Christians to Christ and Creation.

75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION PRICING

In celebration of CILCA's 75th anniversary, all program sessions for summer 2025 will be available for \$75 if you register before April 1st. All registrations made after April 1st will cost \$100.

JOYFUL HEARTS

Campers of all ages with developmental disabilities experience the joys of the outdoors during a 4- or 2-night stay. ~~\$360~~/~~*\$180~~ **\$75***

- Full Week: **June 8-12**
- Half Week: **June 8-10* or 10-12***

BOLD SPIRITS

4th- thru 6th-grade campers experience 5 nights of Camp CILCA. ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session I: **June 1-6**
- Session II: **July 13-18**

DAUNTLESS SOULS

6th- thru 8th-grade campers gather for a screen-free week of life-changing outdoor adventure. ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session I: **June 15-20**
- Session II: **July 6-11**

DAY CAMP

Grades 1st-8th come for the day Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. A daily lunch is provided. ~~\$150/week~~. ~~\$75*/week~~

- Session: **Every week May 28-August 1**

WE NEED YOU!

9th-graders and up, serve as a Junior Counselor or Joyful Hearts volunteer and enjoy camp absolutely free!

- Joyful Hearts Volunteer - **June 8-12**
- J.C. Training - **May 27**

GENERATIONS

Campers age 4 thru 4th grade are introduced to camp with a 1-night stay with a parent or other adult. **\$75 per person**

- Session I: **June 20-21**
- Session II: **July 18-19**

AQUA WEEK

4th- thru 6th-grade water-loving campers will enjoy a full week of water-based activities. ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session: **July 13-18**

SURVIVAL WEEK

Grades 6-8 learn fire starting, outdoor cooking, shelter building, sleeping under the stars, and more. Each day will teach and develop a new skill useful to surviving outdoors. ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session: **June 22-27**

INTREPID HEARTS

High school students enjoy the rejuvenation of God's creation through a week or half week of camp. ~~\$375/\$180*~~ (half) **\$75***

- Full Week: **June 29-July 4**
- Half Week: **June 29-July 1 or 2-4***

PATHFINDERS

1st- thru 4th-grade campers break out on their own with a 2- or 3-night stay. ~~\$155~~/~~*\$180~~ **\$75***

- Session I: **May 28-30**
- Session II: **July 23-25**
- Session III: **July 27-30***

NIGHT OWL

6th- thru 8th-graders experience camp while staying up all night and sleeping all day. Enough said! ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session: **July 6-11**

ART, DRAMA, & ATHLETICS

5th- thru 8th-grade campers choose one track—Art, Drama, or Athletics—for the week & are led by experienced instructors. ~~\$375~~ **\$75***

- Session: **June 15-20**

FAMILY CAMP

Parents and children of any age are able to enjoy 3 days and 2 nights at camp with their family. ~~\$400~~ for up to 5 family members + ~~\$80~~ for each additional person. ~~\$375~~ + ~~\$75~~

- Session: **July 20-22**

REGISTER TODAY!

Find in-depth details on each camp & register on our website!
Ages based on grade completed.

WWW.CILCA.ORG



Find out more at www.cilca.org



Christ the King (Cristo Rey) Lutheran Church

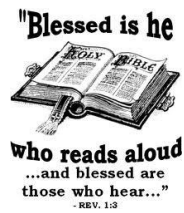
1301-19th Street, East Moline, IL 61244

E-mail: cristorey-em@sbcglobal.net Ph. (309) 738-6124

Rev. Pablo G. Domínguez



FEBRUARY 2025



A church member told me that she decided to read the Bible. She has read it through twice, and she has started to read it for the third time, and various Bible texts. She told me that reading the Holy Scriptures has been a great blessing and comfort for her soul. I congratulated her for her commitment to nourish her faith. She then shared with me that she was not enjoying reading the Book of Revelations. She tried to read the chapters fast because she didn't like all the numbers, the horses, the wars, the blood, and the many things that disturbed and frightened her. I could see her anguish and fear as we talked. I explained to her that the

book of Revelations has difficult passages to understand and to interpret. That's why other believers have teachings different from ours, such as, the rapture account where it is believed that the faithful will be snatched into heaven based on Mat. 24:40-41; the millennium account where it is believed that Christ will reign on the earth for 1000 years based on Rev. 20:4; and the Armageddon account where it is believed that a great war will occur based on Rev. 16:16. I also explained to her that some groups dare to name the very dates they believe Jesus will return. The different groups have various teachings and find it difficult to agree with each other. Lutherans do not accept these interpretations. First, because they are mere speculations which have no firm Scriptural basis. Secondly, we believe what the Bible teaches that we cannot know the day and the hour when Jesus will come again. Thirdly, we believe that the majority of these passages are symbolic and should not be taken literally. It is clear that there are many Christians who spend a lot of time studying these prophecies while trying to set dates and interpret each symbol. However, we believe that it is more pleasing to God to pass our time serving our neighbor and fortifying our relationship with Christ. Besides that, we always need to prepare for our death or for the second return of our Lord. After this brief explanation, our sister in Christ, will no longer need to fear, and it is the same for all of us. Christ is the central truth as He says, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end"* Rev. 22: 13

The Rock Island Circuit Mission Council, also called the Hispanic Council, began in 2002 with a project. Pastors and laypeople in the Rock Island Circuit knew that Spanish-speaking Pastor Pablo Dominguez was coming to East Moline, called as a District Missionary. They also knew he would be starting Hispanic ministry in the Quad Cities from scratch. Initially, those who gathered as the mission council thought of themselves as the church council that he did not have at the time.

Circuit churches sent one representative apiece to the mission council. Its meetings provided information about Pastor Dominguez's work and sparked interest. The mission council also became a way to bring to bear and coordinate various skills that members of circuit churches wanted to contribute to the Hispanic mission: carpentry, bookkeeping, laying carpet, etc.

In time, the mission council also provided financial support to the mission. The council opened its own bank account. For a while it paid various expenses such as van insurance. In 2019 the council closed its account, for

Cristo Rey Lutheran Church had assumed responsibility for all the expenses which the council had been paying. And several council members were instrumental in arranging fundraising projects in circuit churches to help

Cristo Rey return \$10,000 of subsidy money to the Central Illinois District in 2019. Council members have enjoyed learning about Hispanic culture. Pastor Dominguez has taught them a great deal, not only about culture but also about servanthood in Christ.

The Rock Island Circuit Mission Council's role has changed over the years. Yet its commitment to Christ and to the cause of Lutheran mission outreach to Spanish-speaking residents of the Quad Cities has remained.

The Lord has used its dedicated efforts in cooperation with the Central Illinois District.

"I thank my God . . . because of your partnership in the Gospel" (Phil. 1:3-5). {January 2020}

You are welcome to be part of the Hispanic Council. Contact us

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article
February 2025
“Christ’s Life, and Love, and Light”

Open our eyes Lord to see Your love’s intent,
To know with minds and hearts its depth and height
May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ’s life, and love, and light. (LSB 788)

As stewards enter the month of February, it is fitting that we look at the last stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788). It is in these words that we see that the heart of stewardship is indeed love. Love has flowed from our Lord to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This love is then to flow from us to others. Being a conduit of love is really the central task of what it means to be a steward. The Lord entrusts us with His love that reconciles us to Himself, so that we might be stewards of the Gospel reconciliation that is freely given through us to those around us.

If we don’t see this love from God to us, then through us, to others, our eyes will be closed not just to the needs of those around us. They will also be closed to the very heart of the Gospel itself. This is why the hymnist prays that the Lord would “Open our eyes, Lord, to see Your love’s intent, To know with minds and hearts its depth and height.”

Only when we are immersed in God’s Holy Word, washed in Holy Baptism’s life-giving water and fed on the holy, precious, body and blood of Jesus in the Holy Supper, will the Spirit be able to open our eyes to see the Lord’s loving intent for us, and those we know and love. Sin blinds us. It makes us think that we are the center of our world, and our pleasure is the key.

In the Word, the Lord shows us the depth and height of His love. The depth of that love is what moved Him from His throne in heaven into our world. There He would don our human flesh, walk the dusty roads of Palestine, and set His face toward Jerusalem. Once there we get to see the height of His love, as He is elevated on a Roman cross to die a death that we deserve. But that would not be the end. He would be lowered into a tomb for three days. On that third day we then see the heights of love ascended to in His resurrection. This resurrection is already ours too!

The depth and height of this love poured out on us by the Holy Spirit then is distributed through us to others. Christ’s servant love is shown in our servant love. The hymn utters the prayer of every Christian steward:

May thankfulness be days in service spent
Reflection of Christ’s life, and love, and light.

This is the task for which stewards were originally created. Bearing the image of creation and redemption, we reflect Christ’s love to those around us. The light of Christ shining through us to others is the true stewardship to which we are called. It takes place in our homes. It is lived out in our workplaces and classrooms. As we bear the life, love and light received in Word and Sacrament, we carry it out in service to our neighbor and for the glory of God!

Forgive us, Lord, when our stewardship of thankfulness is shallow or lacking! Fill us with Your life, love and light! Not just for us, but through us to those we know and love, that they may know Your life, love and light for them!



TREES CLEARED, HOPE RESTORED

LUTHERAN CHURCH CHARITIES (LCC) LUTHERAN EARLY RESPONSE TEAM (LERT) VOLUNTEERS RETURN TO NORTH CAROLINA TO CONTINUE HURRICANE HELENE RECOVERY EFFORTS

In September 2024, **North Carolina** was severely impacted by **Hurricane Helene**, primarily in its western **Appalachian** region, causing significant destruction of infrastructure and residential areas.

Lutheran Church Charities **Lutheran Early Response Teams (LERT)** volunteers assessed 104 sites and completed 70 sites during a three-week deployment in western North Carolina in September and October 2024.

Help your community in times of disaster. Get trained to serve as a LERT volunteer.



When disasters strike, lives, homes, businesses, churches...everything and everyone can be affected. LCC LERT volunteers respond quickly to serve people affected by a disaster.

LEARN MORE & REGISTER

Lutheran Church Charities will provide **LCMS LERT** (Lutheran Early Response Team) **Basic training:**

**Saturday, February 22 -
Fellowship of Faith Lutheran Church
6120 Mason Hill Road
McHenry, IL 60150**

Registration: 8:30 am – 9:00 am
Training: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

February 2025



Immanuel Lutheran Church
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
3300 24th Street, Rock Island, IL 61201-6212
Office: 309-786-3391 Website: Immanuelri.org



<p><i>RICC – Home School</i> <i>CC – Home School</i> FUTBOL – M-Th 5-8 pm In the gym (days vary)</p>						1
<p>2 7:15 am Bd of Elders 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:30 am Bible Study/SS 5:30 pm – Immanuel Youth Group</p>	<p>3 7 am Matins 8-4 <i>RICC</i> 6 pm Book Club</p>	<p>4 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen Bible St.</p>	<p>5 7 pm - RI Circuit Youth Group Planning Board 8 pm – Youth Group Programming Board</p>	6	7	8
<p>9 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:30 am Bible Study/SS</p>	<p>10 7 am Matins 8-4 <i>RICC</i> 6 pm Book Club</p>	<p>11 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen Bible St.</p>	<p>12 9-N - <i>CHALK</i></p>	13	<p>14 Deadline for submitting information for March IMAGE</p>	15
<p>16 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:30 am Bible Study/SS</p>	<p>17 7 am Matins 8-4 <i>RICC</i> 6 pm Book Club</p>	<p>18 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen Bible St.</p>	<p>19 9-N - <i>CHALK</i></p>	20	21	<p>22 6:00 pm Doors – 5:30 TRIVIA NIGHT Fundraiser for Immanuel Youth Group</p>
<p>23 9:00 am Worship w/HC 10:30 am Bible Study/SS 2-5 – Circuit Youth Group Outing</p>	<p>24 7 am Matins 8-4 <i>RICC</i> 6 pm Book Club</p>	<p>25 9:30 am Bible Study 6 pm Intergen Bible St.</p>	<p>26 9-N - <i>CHALK</i></p>	27	28	



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

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: www.immanuelri.org

Church Office Phone: 309-786-3391

Pastor Astrowski's Phone: 989-326-0199

Email Addresses: Pastor Astrowski – pastrowski@gmail.com Church Office – officeimmanuelri@gmail.com

Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Immanuel-Lutheran-Church-RockIsland-IL-LCMS-179175395513326/>

All Sunday services are “live” streamed on Facebook at 9 am Sundays and posted to the church’s YouTube channel at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWLcoXZtMq13HOqRo_uifqg/featured?view_as=subscriber.

Additionally, you can tune in to Pastor’s nightly devotion each evening at 9 pm “live” on Facebook or find it on the church’s YouTube page later.