



# MESSENGER

Immanuel  
Lutheran Church

A community growing in Christ, living in grace and serving in love.

August 2021

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## SUNDAY MORNINGS

### Worship

We gather for worship at **9 am** on Sunday mornings both in person and online. You can watch the livestream on our website, through YouTube or on Facebook. You can also find recordings of past Sundays in all 3 places.

### Holy Communion

We will commune in person and virtually through August's series on the Bread of Life.

### Fellowship

Coffee time will be held outside after Sunday worship.

## BUILDING REOPEN UPDATE

Dear Immanuel Community,

As the Building Reopen Team has met through all these months of the pandemic, we have discerned numbers and trends, deliberating at length about the best ways to be safe as a church community. God is amazing and has given us just what we need! The Immanuel community and staff are amazing and have shown resilience, faithfulness and creativity throughout this time!

We are in Phase 3, Step D, of the four-phased Reopen Plan and will be holding that course at this time. However, our team is meeting monthly, and we are each following the case numbers and vaccination rates daily. We are in communication when changes are needed.

The plan has been revised and adapted as the situation has unfolded, and we have made some adjustments:

- We will now be able to sing in worship indoors while wearing masks
- Reservations are no longer required for worship

THANK YOU, people of Immanuel, for doing your part to keep the community safe, having patience in times of uncertainty and being flexible and innovative in doing ministry.

With faith,

Building Reopen Team

*Deb Ahlquist, Pastor Cindy Bullock, Dale Fierke, Harvey Jaeger, Carl Johnson, Maria Reed*

*Continued on page 6*

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## FROM THE PASTOR

### Immanuel enters partnership with Augsburg University

This spring, Immanuel applied and was accepted into a cohort with 10 other congregations to learn how to be a “Public Church,” that is, a church that is involved with and a resource to its neighborhood. Over the course of two years, we will reach out, getting to know our neighbors, as well as reach in to determine our own core beliefs. We will develop prayer practices that will help us listen for God’s guidance, then partner with our neighbors to be a source of good news in ways that are meaningful to us all.

All of this is led by the staff of Augsburg University’s Riverside Innovation Hub, through a grant from the Eli Lilly Foundation for Thriving Congregations. The 11 congregations involved are all from the greater Twin Cities area ([see the list here](#)). Each congregation has a 5-person team who will attend learning events, work with other congregations in learning cohorts and come back to their congregations to get everyone involved in learning and experimenting. God has blessed us with a strong leadership team as we embark on this 2-year learning process: Sue Klevan, Loren Danielson, Kelsey Maniaci, Scott Norquist and Pastor Cindy.



### Have bowl, will travel: Baptisms continue

We welcome Gianna Valentina Rodriguez into the body of Christ. Gianna was baptized on Saturday, July 11, at Minnehaha Park in Minneapolis. She was surrounded by her parents, Samantha and JR, brothers Tristan, Miguel and Matteo, and sponsors Kyla Blomquist and Vicki Jahnke.

Immanuel welcomes this precious child of God.

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## WORSHIP & MUSIC



### Immanuel’s Music & Arts Camp starts soon!

We are pleased to be welcoming 70 children/youth to Immanuel’s Music and Arts Camp! Please keep the campers and staff in your prayers during camp week, August 9–13. Because of the size of the camp, we are unable to have a Friday evening closing program. Instead, we are planning to make a video available to parents and the congregation capturing the creative work that happened at camp! Look for details in News & Notes.

### Choirs this fall

We will be making some decisions regarding the startup of our choirs, with the guidance of the Building Reopen Team, at the end of August. At this point we plan to have the adult choir rehearsals begin **Wednesday, September 8**, and youth and children’s choirs begin rehearsing the following **Wednesday, September 15**. For more information about musical opportunities, go to our website or contact [Chris Cherwien](#).

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## WORSHIP & MUSIC (continued)

### **Outdoor worship will be August 8**

Bring a chair or blanket to worship **Sunday, August 8, at 9 am**. We'll worship and commune together on the Goodrich Avenue lawn.

### **We need coffee hour volunteers**

We need volunteers to host fellowship time after worship through the rest of the summer. The host would provide lemonade or juice (and prepare coffee if desired) and a simple snack for 20 to 30 people. Call the church office or sign up [online](#).

### **Sponsor altar flowers to honor a special person or event**

Is there a special anniversary, birthday or memorial you'd like to honor? You can purchase altar flowers to celebrate or mark the event. Call the church office or sign up in the Gathering Space and be sure to include your dedication. Two bouquets cost \$50. Please note "Altar Flowers" in the memo line of your check or choose "OTHER" and note "Altar Flowers" if you pay online.

### **Worship this fall**

Please stay tuned for more information about worship this fall. The Worship and Music team and staff are meeting in early August and will be communicating fall times for worship and Sunday morning activities to the congregation.

### **Welcome, Peter Aldrich, Immanuel's new organist!**

Peter Aldrich will begin his music ministry at Immanuel on August 22. We thank God for the gifts that he brings to our congregation.

"Lutheran church music has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. I began singing with the children's choir at Holy Trinity Lutheran in Minneapolis when I was 4 years old and have been singing ever since. After studying the piano through high school, my passion for sacred music motivated me to begin organ lessons in college, where I studied for 4 years while completing my B.A. in history, eventually serving as organist for a UCC congregation in my senior year. While there, I had the opportunity to plan worship music that richly augmented the message of the service, and this experience has guided my approach to music programming ever since. I see the centrality of music at Immanuel expressed in the summer Music and Arts Camp; as a young musician, programs like that were vital to my development, and I want to help bring music to other young people."

— Peter Aldrich

Please make sure to greet Peter and welcome him into our church family community!



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## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY

### Confirmation kicks off mid-September

Attention all families with incoming 7-9th-graders: Confirmation orientation will be **Tuesday September 14, at 7 pm**. It will be held virtually, so keep an eye on your emails for a Zoom link. We will want one parent present with each child.

**7-8<sup>th</sup>-grade confirmation** will begin **Wednesday, September 15, at 7 pm**.

For now the plan is to meet in person at church. The small size of the class

and that children 12 and up can be vaccinated are the two factors that

make this feel possible for now. As always, we will be keeping an eye on all incoming information and re-evaluate as needed.

CONFIRMATION

**9<sup>th</sup>-grade confirmation** will be meeting once a month with Pastor Cindy. Keep an eye on your email for a schedule and more information.



### Let's get social, high-schoolers!

We are excited to be bringing back once-a-month Sunday night high school youth night! We will kick things off **Sunday, September 19, at 7 pm**. As always, we will be keeping an eye on all incoming information and re-evaluate as needed.

### Sunday school in fall: A moving target

Families, we're asking for flexibility and grace as we head back into our program year. Our one certainty at this point is that our Sunday morning faith formation (aka Sunday school) is going to look different.

1. Rally Day will be pushed back to **Sunday, October 3**. We'll provide opportunities to gather the kids starting **September 19**, with a focus on reacquainting ourselves with one another and the church. At this point, we're looking at using the Lower Commons to gather our preK and elementary children, as it is connected to our improved ventilation system. Location for secondary students is TBD.
2. Our gathering time is not yet set because our fall worship time has not been decided. However, it's likely that if there's 1 service, we'll meet after it. Sessions will be 45 minutes or so.
3. We'll follow ILC guidelines on masks, which currently says we all need to mask up indoors when a group includes someone under age 12—and our 6<sup>th</sup>-graders are still in that category.
4. We're thinking about format changes as we move further into the fall; the 1950s model of education doesn't feel right anymore. We also want to be sure we're taking the safest approach possible with our unvaccinated kids.

Questions or concerns? Contact [Emily King](#) and [Michelle Stillwell](#).

### Caregiver meeting about fall programming: September 13

Parents and other caregivers, please join Emily King and Michelle Stillwell for a hybrid in-person/Zoom meeting about the fall. We'll share our plans for Sunday mornings, Wednesdays and other gathering times and provide time for discussion about safety and other questions. Meet at **7 pm Monday, September 13**, in the East Lounge or [on Zoom](#) (link will be provided again in News & Notes).

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## CHILDREN YOUTH & FAMILY



### **VBS day camp was small but successful**

We had 23 children on-site for our VBS week in mid-July and as many adults! Did you see our Canopy City in the parking lot or the drama tent along Snelling? It was loud out there but so great to be outside and visible! Our format was more low-key than in years past, but we found it allowed for the community-rebuilding that we hoped for.

Our mini VBS on Saturday morning was held at Pilgrim Lutheran. We had time to play, sing and create with parents and children together. Thank you to all who participated!

*Many thanks to our ILC crew: Sarah Brainard-Marsh, Pastor Cindy, Christine Danielson, Penelope Hansen, Tatum Herrmann, Josie Iaria, Steian Johnson, Audrey King, Sue Mitchell, Michelle Stillwell, Ingrid Thune, Katie Thune and Larry Wilson.*

### **Nursery and KidPacks unavailable**

Under the ILC reopening guidelines, the nursery continues to be closed. Once we reach full Phase 4 opening and are given clearance, we plan to reopen and staff the nursery on Sunday mornings and on Wednesdays.

Also, my apologies for not pulling the KidPacks from the narthex sooner. I am not cleaning them out or refilling them at this time. Clipboards with coloring sheets and colored pencils will be available, and the library is open.

— Emily

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## SOCIAL ACTION

### **Flea Market & Fall Festival update**

**What we know today:** We will host a fall fundraiser to support our community partners, with a goal to give away \$7,500. That is a priority. We also want to offer the time-honored element of community engagement/fellowship time that comes with the Flea Market & Fall Festival. Community safety is our top consideration as we support our community partners.

**What's next:** We are exploring options for how to meet these goals. A sale and carnival are still possible, but not guaranteed. As we're weighing our options, we will work closely with the Building Reopen team to ensure we are in alignment with their guidelines. We will collectively assess whether the congregational community is ready for a large-scale event.

The FMFF leadership team sees this as an opportunity to re-think and get creative with a long-standing tradition. We may try some new things or revisit past activities. We know the Holy Spirit will be at work.

Stay tuned for details published in News & Notes, on Facebook and at [ilcsp.org](http://ilcsp.org) about our final decisions. We are still eyeing September 24–25 for our target weekend of activity.

### **Book discussion on racism**

Read *Dear White Peacemakers, Dismantling Racism with Grit and Grace* by Osheta Moore and join the discussion **Thursday, August 12, at 7 pm** in the Danielsons' back yard ([address in the directory](#)). Check out a copy from the church library or purchase at Red Balloon, using "ILC" as the coupon code to receive 20% off. From Moore's website: "*Dear White Peacemakers* is an invitation to white Christians to come to the table and join this hard work and holy calling."

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## BUILDING REOPEN FAQ

The Building Reopen Team anticipates that many of you may have questions about the reopening process and decisions, so they have developed the following Frequently Asked Questions. If you have more questions, give one of them a call or email (you can find them in the church directory): Deb Ahlquist, Pastor Cindy Bullock, Dale Fierke, Harvey Jaeger, Carl Johnson or Maria Reed.

### FAQs

#### 1. When will we reopen?

We ARE open!

- Worship is happening in-person at Immanuel for those who are comfortable
- Worship is streaming online for those who are more comfortable with that format
- Small groups and meetings are gathering in-person at Immanuel or online or a combination of in-person and virtual

#### 2. Do I have to wear a mask?

Yes, mostly.

- Masks are required for indoor worship. During indoor services the pastor and worship leaders will be masked except for when speaking. Vaccinated musicians will be located in the balcony and will be masked except for when singing or using wind instruments.
- Outdoor worship and gatherings do not require masks, but you may wear one if you prefer.
- Groups of any size that include children under 12 are required to wear masks indoors.
- Unvaccinated people participating in small groups or gatherings indoors should wear masks.
- Small groups whose members have all been vaccinated may make their choice about masking indoors.

#### 3. I'm fully vaccinated, why do I have to wear a mask in worship?

Immanuel is a mixed community of both vaccinated and unvaccinated people, and a vaccine is not yet available for the youngest. As recent variants have proven to be more and more contagious, those who are unvaccinated are at an even higher risk. Singing, which is central to our worship tradition, has proven to be a higher risk activity, as it releases droplets into the air that can linger for hours. At this time, in order to be most inclusive for all to participate, we continue to wear a mask.

#### 4. What if I forget my mask?

Disposable masks are available, just ask an usher if you can't find one.

#### 5. Is it crowded in church?

No, with the 100-person limit, there is room for all to spread out in the sanctuary.

#### 6. Do I have to make a reservation?

No, reservations are no longer required; they may be required in the future in anticipation of larger services.

#### 7. What if more than 100 people come?

We have found this limit to be more than enough. We will ask for your patience and flexibility with seating arrangements if we exceed this capacity.

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## FAQs (continued)

### **8. Is there a place for me to sit if I want more distance from others?**

Yes, there are pews blocked off near the back of the sanctuary for those who would like to ensure more distance between them and others.

### **9. Are we sharing the peace?**

Not at this time.

### **10. Is the offering plate being passed?**

Yes, but held by the ushers. We encourage all to support the ministries of Immanuel by giving through the mail, recurring payments or online.

### **11. How does Holy Communion work?**

- At home, you will need to get the elements (bread and grape juice or wine) ready on your own and the pastor will give you instructions during the service for receiving those.
- At church, ushers will ask you to keep a distance between yourself and other groups as you go forward. Communion assistants will wear masks and wash their hands prior to serving the individual cups of wine and wafers. You may remove your mask to receive the elements and replace it as you return to your seat. If you would prefer not to come to the front of the sanctuary, let the usher know and communion assistants will come to you.

### **12. Is there coffee hour after church?**

Beverages and treats are being served outside on the Goodrich Ave lawn when weather permits. Outside is safer than inside and allows us to gather unmasked and socialize as long as we like.

### **13. I can go to eat at a restaurant, so why can't we have meals at church?**

We are different from a restaurant, as we are a community of people. We want to be inclusive and protective for everyone in our community. At this time food service and close proximity are higher risk activities. When everyone is able to participate safely, we can begin to have meals together.

### **14. Other churches have opened, why can't we?**

See question #1. Plus, please remember that all churches are unique, with different settings, different theologies and different practices. We are all doing the best we can to make decisions for our faith communities.

### **15. What will happen in the fall?**

That depends on what happens with our local and state covid-19 case rates and vaccinations. We will continue to watch and make adjustments. There are still uncertainties about Sunday School and fall traditions that will require continued flexibility. If you have questions about a specific event, please contact one of the BRO Team members.

### **16. What will happen if there is another surge?**

We now have the equipment, knowledge and capacity to worship fully online or in a hybrid mode. We will trust the Holy Spirit to continue leading us through changes and challenges.

### **17. What if I have questions about an upcoming event?**

Deanna in the church office can answer questions about scheduling and procedures for events or meetings. If there are questions she can't answer, she will refer you to the Building Reopen Team.

## MOMENT IN HISTORY—150th ANNIVERSARY

### Improvers or “The Imps”

When I interviewed The Imps, they were quite a perky bunch already at 9 am! With platters of donuts cut into fourths, so they could watch their waistlines, and the coffee being generously poured, the bantering begins! When I told them that I wanted to interview them for the Messenger, disclaimers were tossed around and I was reminded, “What happens at the Improvers stays at the Improvers!” What follows has been distilled to protect the “not-so-innocent”!

A little history: Interim Pastor Dana Nissen was the catalyst for starting the Improvers in 2000. He had started a similar group at his previous church in Chicago. He told a story

about how the Chicago group nearly didn’t get started because one of the members fell off a ladder and died. “Yea, that almost happened to Norm Schwendeman!” someone quipped. You can see where this history lesson is going—NOWHERE! We’ll move on to what The Imps do best—improve our church!

While drinking coffee and eating donuts, they discussed items that needed to be fixed. “Emily King wants us to fix this cart that was fastened to a furniture dolly and make it more stable.” “Is that one of our dollies?” “I don’t know, I think we better count our dollies!” Curt Hogenson fixed a fan that needed a new switch. “Did you keep the receipt?” asked Lew Dohman. “Remember the fan that started the fire in my garage?” asked John Skalbeck. Don Kyser said he looked at his 16-year-old fan at home that has a wobbly switch and thought he should toss it and buy a new fan for \$15. Doug Wangenstein said, “Maybe you should spend \$20 and put in a new switch!” Doug Wangenstein received a list of things to do and told the group, “Here are some items that were recommended we check today: The lights on the EXIT signs—” More discussion ... “I thought we checked the lights when Sparky the Squirrel met his demise!” (Sparky the Squirrel chewed through some electrical wires causing major power outages throughout the church.) They discussed a room that has only two electrical outlets so some long cords were used to connect items. “Are we covered by OSHA?” “No! We have our own—with more benefits!”

At the end of the day, through countless jokes and wisecracks, The Imps completed seven projects including repairing Emily’s cart, fixing a toilet and checking the emergency lights on the EXIT signs throughout the building. As Lew Dohman said, “You name it, we do it!”

When asked about their favorite projects, these came up: Roger Forman spear-headed the replacement of lights which saves the church money and the Improvers’ time since the bulbs last longer. The flower gardens that Jerry Sandahl cares for each week. The overhaul of the women’s “heated” bathroom. We have the BEST coffee! Painting outside! More discussion ... “To paint the windows way up high, we’ll hire a lift. **Hey!** That would be a great idea for the Fall Festival—The Imps can give kids rides to the top windows!”

Now you know why they are affectionately nicknamed “The Imps!”

### You Name It, We Do It!

Tom Cline, Lew Dohman, Russ Edhlund, Dennis Engebretson, Roger Forman, Curt Hogenson, Paul Horstmann, Don Kyser, Sue Mitchell, Jerry Sandahl, Doug Sherman, John Skalbeck, Andy Urness, Doug Wangenstein

— Judie Prayfrock



Imps at work in 2018

## NEW IN THE LIBRARY

261.8

Sal Salvatierra, Alexia

Faith-rooted organizing: mobilizing the church in service to the world C. 2014

People of faith have long been known for their charitable support of food banks and acts of kindness to people in need. While it is an act of love to provide a needy person with a hand-out, how much more effective it is to engage people in solving issues of poverty and inequality through legislative action toward equity and justice. This is a vital guide that will help faith communities act more boldly to address the corrupt structures and systems that oppress the poor and powerless.

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707.1

Coo Cooper, Arshay

A Most beautiful thing: the true story of America's first all-black high school rowing team. C. 2015

In the 1990s Chicago's West Side was a death-trap filled with poverty, drug addiction, gangs, racism and everyday violence. One day, while trying hard to stay out of trouble, Arshay saw a boat in the school's lunchroom with a large poster: JOIN THE CREW TEAM! His curiosity led him to find out more and then take a chance to join a crew which forever changed his life for the better, as well as those of his fellow rowers!

This story is now a documentary titled *A Most Beautiful Thing*.

261.1

Pla Platt, David

Taking back your faith from the American Dream. C.1994

This is not a recently published book, but it has an important message of discipleship which is often lost in today's world. It also includes a radical one-year challenge to transform the way you live.

The Church Council did not meet in July. They will resume with a meeting August 17 at 7 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Ahlquist, Council President, or any Council member. The council meets monthly, usually on the third Tuesday. Meetings are open to the public, and all are welcome.

Church Council/Team Chairs		
<b>Deb Ahlquist</b> , Council President	<b>Ross Robey</b> , Financial Secretary	<b>David Alstead</b> , Worship & Music
<b>Paul Mattessich</b> , Past President	<b>David Alstead</b> , Asst. Financial Secretary	<b>Gay Bartholic</b> , Stewardship
<b>Jeff Schmidt</b> , Vice President	<b>Nick Consoer</b> , Member at Large	<b>Mary Gwen Thompson</b> , Children, Youth & Family
<b>Martha Hansen</b> , Secretary	<b>Sue Klevan</b> , Member at Large	<b>Harvey Jaeger</b> , Property
<b>Mark Thompson</b> , Treasurer	<b>John Toso</b> , Member at Large	<b>David Hansen</b> , Membership
<b>Jackie Hippen</b> , Asst. Treasurer	<b>Lee Bjerke</b> , Finance	<b>Christine Danielson</b> , Social Action

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