



IMMANUEL *God With Us* 150

LUTHERAN CHURCH 1871-2021 YEARS

A Norwegian traveling minister served communion on December 19, 1871, to the nine Norwegian immigrants who went on to organize the Immanuel Lutheran Church congregation in St. Paul.



*Immanuel's 1st pastor,
Rev. Osten Hanson*



The first members of the Immanuel congregation in 1871

The congregation bought a church building in 1880 and moved it to 14th and Canada in downtown St. Paul, near where Regions Hospital is today. In 1890, Immanuel built its first building at the same location.



Immanuel at 14th and Canada



Immanuel's new construction at 14th and Canada (1890)

Immanuel had two more moves. The first was to St. Albans and Aurora in 1919 (that building still serves as a church today). In 1921, Immanuel merged with Macalester Park Lutheran Church, and together in 1925 they built the church at Goodrich and Snelling that is now our home. The Immanuel congregation was sent as a mission church to the Macalester area — an area of St. Paul then far from downtown but growing in population. Our congregation conducted a community-wide survey in 1945 to identify unreached families. Volunteers reached out to the neighborhood, and the congregation grew by 800 new members in five years.



Immanuel at St. Albans & Aurora



Immanuel at Goodrich & Snelling (the entrance was on Goodrich)

Eventually the parsonage, then located north of the sanctuary, was moved so that a parking lot could be created. Immanuel's address shifted from 1567 Goodrich Ave. to 104 South Snelling Ave. and a door was added on the Snelling side. Several additions and remodeling initiatives over the years added the Sunday School wing, the elevator, and other improvements. The most recent Building Bridges remodeling project, which was completed in 2006, connected the education wing to the sanctuary, added a gathering space, and expanded basement space.



The parsonage was moved in 1960



The Snelling entrance after the 2006 renovation

During 150 years, Immanuel has worshiped under the leadership of 71 pastors

Immanuel's first pastors were traveling ministers who came to provide sacraments to the congregation and share the Word. The first minister called to serve Immanuel was Fredrick Carlson in 1880. One third of the pastors were born in Norway and services were held in Norwegian until 1930. Our longest-serving minister was Elder Bentley, who was Immanuel's pastor for 28 years. Immanuel has sent 14 sons and daughters into the ministry over the years.



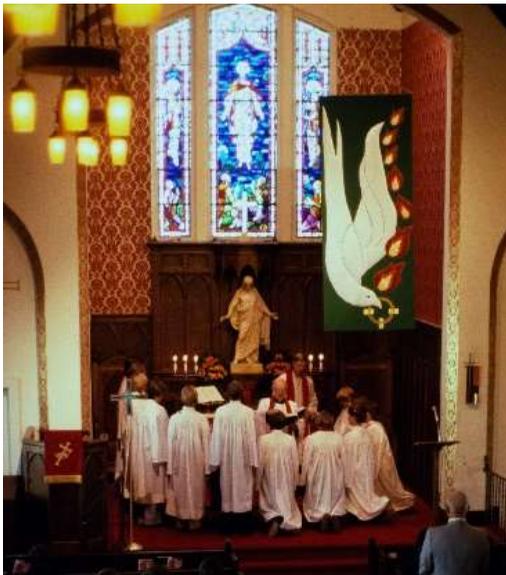
Past and present pastors with Bishop Mark Hanson (back row) at the 125th anniversary celebration (1996)



Leonardson wedding (1946 with Pastor Conrad Thompson)



Baptism (Pastor Sylvan Hengesteg)



Confirmation (Pastors Elder Bentley and John Lohre)

Music

Music has been a core feature of worship at Immanuel. There have been adult and children's choirs, handbells (since 1978); musical theater performances; pageants celebrating Easter, Christmas and Epiphany; and special choir concerts. We have been blessed with talented choir directors, organists, and directors of worship and music. In 1976 the *Rejoice – A Witness* cantata was written by an Immanuel member and performed over 25 times.



Handbells rehearsal (1981)



Cantata, A New Creation (2019)



Christmas pageant (1979)



Easter pageant (with Pastor Bentley as Jesus)

Christian Education

Sunday School was the precipitating factor for the merger of Macalester Park Lutheran and Immanuel. Families attending Trinity Lutheran Church in Frogtown had started a Sunday School in the Macalester area because Trinity was too far from Summit and Grand avenues. The Sunday School grew into the Macalester Park congregation, which merged with Immanuel in 1921. Immanuel's Sunday School attendance was 372 in 1960. This was more than the church could handle even with busses picking up the children and three staggered class times. So, an Education Wing was built and inaugurated in 1961. Children were released from school to attend Wednesday afternoon religious classes at Immanuel in the 1950s and 1960s.



Rachel Husom teaching Sunday School. Rachel was the first female superintendent. (1964-73)



Sunday School children helping at the groundbreaking ceremony for the Education Wing (1960)



Youth bus trip (1980)



Sunday School opening (1980)

Women's and Men's Organizations

The women of Immanuel have delved into Bible study and had fun together. They've also worked hard to support Immanuel as well as local and world-wide missions. They raised money through musical programs, ice cream socials, a State Fair stand, basket socials, and sales of vanilla, cakes, Jell-O, magazines, crafts, car fresheners, and cookbooks.



Board of the women's group (1921)



Mother-Daughter Banquet Entertainment (1932)

Men's groups have been integral, too. Immanuel is known through a wide area of Minnesota for its November lutefisk dinner, hosted by the Immanuel Men's Club. Over 700 people are served, and all proceeds are given back to the community. The lutefisk dinner was started in 1935 by Immanuel women. In the 1940s the women and men put on the dinner together, and in 1952 the men took over. In 2000 the Improvers group was formed to help care for the building.



Jim Fortchner and David Lindgren preparing lutefisk (1950s)



The Improvers group continue working during the pandemic (2020)

Caring for the Larger Community

Beyond the women's and men's group fundraisers, Immanuel also has held an annual Flea Market since 2004. Today, all proceeds from this event are given to local charities. There are records of similar sales as fundraisers going back over 100 years. A neighborhood carnival was added to the Flea Market in 2010.

Immanuel has provided a meal at the Dorothy Day/St. Paul Opportunity Center once a month, making sloppy Joes with lots of side dishes for hungry guests since 1982.

Immanuel was a force behind the founding of Southeast Asian Ministry. We supported the resettlement of refugee families in our community from Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, as well as Germany and Uganda. We have also been long-time supporters of Lyngblomsten and Lutheran Social Services with financial gifts and volunteers.



Flea Market (2004)



Dorothy Day volunteer cooks (1996)



*Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches
Metro Paint-a-thon*



The Cao family from Vietnam (1994)

Caring for Needs Throughout the World.

Immanuel has been committed to supporting missions far afield from our earliest days. Immanuel began by supporting missions in China, Alaska, and Madagascar. Later support went to South Africa, Colombia, India, Hong Kong, New Guinea, and Brazil. Most recently, Immanuel has established close ties with Guatemala through Common Hope and has two sister congregations in Tanzania: Mkimbizi and Magubike. Immanuel has sent two groups of volunteers on Vision Trips to Guatemala with Common Hope, in 2003 and 2008. Seven groups from Immanuel have traveled to Tanzania to visit our sister congregations there. Students are sponsored in both Guatemala and Tanzania by the Immanuel congregation. We have received representatives from both groups in St. Paul.



House build with Immanuel volunteers through Common Hope in Guatemala (2010)



Helen Frost, missionary to Shishmaref, AK (1926-61), supported by Immanuel



An active quilting group sent quilts to Global Missions (1960)



Leadership of Mkimbizi Lutheran Church in Tanzania with visitors from Immanuel (2013)