

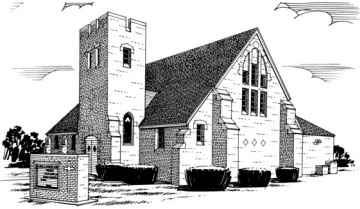
THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

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IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OSMAN

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod



Reverend Jeffrey McPike, BCC

October 2020

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

~ Proverbs 3:5 NIV

From Pastor McPike's Desk...

About Reservations, Masks, and other precautions

COVID-19. Corona Virus. We're all sick of it. We are sick of the restrictions. We are sick of the way it has completely changed our lives. We are sick of wearing masks. We are sick of it running our every day lives.

I'm proud of the way that we at Immanuel, Osman are responding to this virus. So far, compliance with mask wearing, respecting the elders giving directions for seating, maintaining social distancing is for the most part being followed even if it is not popular. There are so many divisions in society over the safety and necessity of these measures. Churches range from not yet having opened to those who are basically back to business as usual using few, if any, precautions... and everything in between.

Rumors are reaching my ears that there are those who feel like restrictions like masks and reservations for church are not appropriate. Certainly, it would seem that calling ahead to attend church is so completely counter to what we are to be all about. Yet these measures are in place to attempt to do the best we can to keep everyone safe. We also chose the "reservation" approach to avoid another, potentially quite difficult situation – members being turned away at the door because the church has reached capacity.

However, if you wish to come to church without making reservations and want to take a chance that there will be room, that is perfectly acceptable. Please know that if we are already at capacity, you will be invited to listen on Radio Osman (90.5), or sit in the hall.

What this all comes down to is, all restrictions are being planned very carefully by the church council. The council has spent many hours and many meetings considering the various possibilities all through this pandemic situation. While you may not agree with what the council has decided, please at least respect how much time, effort and consideration they are putting into trying to do the best they can in these unusual circumstances. And if you do feel strongly that new or different approaches are needed in the midst of this, then apply your voice in a positive way by signing up for the various open offices and join the church council so that you, too, can guide the future course of our congregation.

If you were unable to attend the first service after 17 weeks on July 12, please consider listening to the sermon for that day, titled: "Would Jesus Wear a Mask?" You can find it at www.osmanlutheran.org

Radio Osman

So far, Radio Osman has been working well, though we know that there are issues. The council talked about that in the September meeting as well. Now that the usefulness has been proven, we will look to upgrades to equipment, including an outdoor antenna and increased power to try and improve the quality and reliability of the signal. Please report any problems to Rick Hardesty or Pastor McPike.

Every Sunday Communion

The church council is considering every Sunday communion. The following will give some insight into the

consideration. Please contact Pastor McPike with any questions or concerns. Since the 1990s, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod in convention has passed several resolutions promoting Communion every Sunday. Some churches in our area have since adopted it. St. John-Champaign, Trinity-Urbana, Peace-Thomasboro to name a few. Others are moving a bit more slowly.

The interesting thing is, every-Sunday communion was the common practice of the church from the time of the Apostles for 19 Centuries. The move away from it in America happened for a number of reasons. This included a movement in the church called “Pietism” which caused people to look at Communion preparation or “how ready we are for communion” as so important that we dare not have communion too often, so that we not take it for granted. Another influence in limiting communion, at least here in America, is the way many American protestant churches look at Communion. They see communion as only a ceremony that copies what Jesus did Maundy Thursday to help us remember what He did for us. Lutherans teach that Communion is the true body and blood of Jesus Christ given to bring forgiveness of sins. The answer to the question from that perspective begs another question, “How often do we sin?” Because we sin daily, communion (God’s personal forgiveness) should be something that we get very often.

Yet as we consider the question, “How often should we commune”? The Bible doesn’t say. In fact, the Bible doesn’t say how often we should attend church, either. And even though Jesus said when He gave us communion “Do this as OFTEN as you do it...” He didn’t necessarily define “often.” The reason for this is that communion, like attending church and hearing the words of God’s forgiveness, is a gift from God. Gifts don’t typically include mandates about their use or how often they are used. When they do, they cease to be gifts, and become mandates or demands.

Consider what it is like in intimate relationships. How often should spouses kiss each other? How much time should they spend together? If the question gets turned to “how often do we HAVE to kiss?” or “How often do we HAVE to spend time together?”, the relationship is not on good footing at all. Kissing and spending time together are free expressions of love. If a free expression has to be governed or mandated to a set amount, then they are no longer free expressions. At the same time, if lovers are together and one wants a kiss and the other says, “do I have to kiss you again? I just did that two hours ago!”... I would say the relationship has issues, if it is not actually in pretty serious trouble.

Holy Communion is God’s kiss. God reaches to us in His Word through readings and sermon in the Divine service, and in His word as it is connected to the bread and wine to bring us the body and blood of Christ. Holy Communion binds us to God and binds us together. God has told us to worship OFTEN... and also to commune OFTEN. And while it is true that He has not told us exactly how often OFTEN is, the force of the word (OFTEN) suggests in and of itself that it would be the opposite of INFREQUENT. Or to go back to the illustration – how often do we want to be kissed by God?

COVID-19 has turned the world on its head. Here at Osman, we were out of church for 17 weeks straight. That basically means we missed almost a dozen opportunities to take communion. In addition to that, now that we are meeting in person again, we are limited in how many people can meet. That means that not everyone can be present every Sunday. Since that is the case, it makes sense, after missing so much church, to offer communion every Sunday at least for the time being. This obviously means more work for the elders, altar guild and so forth. However, they have been consulted and are willing to take this on.

The only thing that then stands in the way is our own local tradition. This is not to be dismissed! It does not mean that our practice in the past was wrong and now we are going to “get it right.” Again, God does not spell out anywhere in the Bible what “often” means. Nobody should feel obligated to take communion just because it is offered. This is entirely a matter between you and God. If you feel better taking communion less frequently according to what you have been used to in the past, by all means do that! Nobody is going to look down on you or judge you... and if they do, they judge themselves! Communion should not be something you take anytime it is offered “just because everyone else is doing it.” Each person should decide in their own heart what is right for them.

Offering communion more often will mean that people who attend less than every Sunday will still have plenty of times to take it. That is especially important now that our crowd size is limited.

The church council will be discussing communion frequency again at the October meeting. If you have particular concerns about this, please contact Pastor McPike.

Ladies Aid/LWML News

7 Ladies Aid/LWML members met for a meeting on Thursday, September 10, in the fellowship hall. Correspondence from the newly adopted Seminary student, Mark Peters, was read by Deb Lammle. He sent a family picture which was shared with all. The first \$75 check was sent in September to Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne for his support. Terri Hooker reported that 95 quilts have been completed since last October and are getting boxed for the Lutheran World Relief ingathering in late October in Gibson City. The next quilting dates were announced as October 5th and 7th. Our appreciation for hemming the quilts was given to Debbie Martin and Connie Warsaw. There are also 35 more dresses ready to be mailed to Dresses for Africa. The address of the adopted family, Abby and Amelia Kirkpatrick, was given to the members in hope that cards would be sent for their birthdays in September. It was approved to send a check for \$95 with the quilts to partially cover some of the shipping costs. The Fall rally at Immanuel Lutheran in Danville on September 15th was discussed. LWML Sunday was slated for Sunday, October 4th. With the COVID restrictions the ladies will not help with the service, no quilts will be displayed on the pews, and the ladies will not sit as a group. The "September to Remember" offering idea from the National LWML was explained. This offering will go for the National mission grants and will be matched up to \$10,000. Since some ladies will be donating to that, no mites will be collected at the October meeting. The next meeting will be October 8th at 1:30 PM. Brenda Hendricks will have topic and Shirley Sprau and Diana Zimmerman will be the hostesses.

Congratulations

Congratulations and God's blessings to Amber Hendricks and Chris Kouri who were united in holy matrimony on Saturday, September 26th, in West Branch, Iowa.

LWML Sunday

In 2020 the former Ladies Aid organization of our church which dates to 1921 and the LWML society which was chartered at our church in 1947 joined to make one ladies' group. Today it is officially known as Ladies Aid/LWML. Since the National LWML makes all the materials for this recognized Sunday, which is celebrated once a year, it is titled LWML Sunday. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is the largest official auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. For over 77 years, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries and to support global missions. The motto of LWML is "*Serve the LORD with gladness!*" from Psalm 100:2. Our ladies help several mission ministries. They sponsor a seminary student every year with a financial donation given each month from September to May. This is deposited in the student's account and is used for expenses while he is a student. They also sponsor a resident of Bethesda Homes which provides services and support to help people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They organize the collection of money in baby bottles for the Pregnancy Resource Center in Champaign which is committed to saving the lives of unborn children by promoting life affirming options while sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. They adopt a local family to support with each member taking a different month to send greetings, gifts, or monetary support. They collect mites (coins) in their mite boxes to support both the Central Illinois District mission grants and the national LWML mission grants. They meet on a regular basis to tie quilts (95 this year) to be given to needy families around the world by Lutheran World Relief. In the last few years, they have found a new sewing creation – pillowcase dresses. They have made over 300 dresses to be sent to the organization entitled Little Dresses for Africa which is a registered Christian non-profit charity which sends relief to all parts of Africa through the distribution of little dresses to plant in the hearts of little girls that they are worthy. Our Ladies Aid/LWML ladies meet every month and ALL ladies of the congregation are invited to join in on these mission projects and have some good Christian fellowship!



Update on Declan Lammle

One year ago on September 15th, Declan Luis Lammle, was born weighing just 1 lb. 14 oz. But with God's abundant mercy, our little miracle baby has grown to 25 lbs. He is still on oxygen and is taking medicine for hypertension. Declan will need a PDA closure in the near future. Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) is a heart defect found in the weeks after birth. The blood vessels and lungs have to work much harder to handle the extra blood. This can lead to fluid build up in the lungs and a harder time breathing.

This time in our lives isn't easy, but we're walking through it with a clear reflection of God's grace. There are days that are harder than others, when we feel this is more than we can handle. In those moments we remember the generosity of you, Immanuel Osman, a place where God's strength and support came shining through. Thanks again for your continued prayers!

Ryan, Sandy, and Declan Lammle

October is Pastor Appreciation Month

To Pastor McPike and Pastor Ehlers:

With appreciation for Your Ministry

What We Pray for You:

Guidance - For the paths your feet will daily follow

Wisdom - For the counsel you are asked to give

Compassion - For those you are called upon to help

Strength - To stand for what is true and right, even when there is opposition

Perseverance - To follow the desires God has placed in your heart

Support - For your leadership

Appreciation - For your calling and gifts

Thanks - For the person you are in Christ.

God Bless you Pastor McPike and Pastor Ehlers

The Lord has called and gifted you

To bless you and make you a blessing.

As you rest in Him, He will work.

As you trust in His Ways, He will accomplish His purposes.

May you sense God's pleasure in your faithful serving and know that you are very much appreciated for all you do.

Thanks Pastor McPike and Pastor Ehlers for your faithful service at Immanuel Osman!!

OCTOBER 2020

Due to the COVID-19 Virus guidelines, all these activities will be pending the decisions made by the Church Council and Pastor McPike.

Osman's Upcoming Events

Tentative Upcoming Events

2021 - Centennial Celebration

Statistics

Date	Worship	Sunday School	Adult Class
9/06	44	0	0
9/13	36	0	0
9/20		0	0
9/27		0	0

October Anniversaries

Barb and John Gercken.....10-09-1982
Deborah and Dennis Martin.....10-10-1981
Moneta and Bill McCleary.....10-19-1946
Theresa and Rick Wilson.....10-31-2005

October Birthdays

Tyler Duncan.....10-01
Karen Brown.....10-01
Bill Amdor.....10-03
Steve Martin.....10-07
Eric Zimmerman.....10-08
Dustin Peyton.....10-09
John Gercken.....10-12
Bill McCleary.....10-12
Addison Warsaw.....10-12
David Kunde.....10-15
Wiley Hasty.....10-17
Jordan Bidner.....10-19
Greg Johnson.....10-19
Greg Warsaw.....10-02
Pastor Jeff McPike.....10-24
Katherine Masko.....10-28
Julianna Gercken.....10-31

CALLING AHEAD

Please help us keep everyone safe by calling Rick (309-830-8531) or Jill (217-841-3487) to indicate your desire to attend church the upcoming Sunday. While "reservations" for church may sound really counter to Christ's example of being welcoming, it is currently an unfortunate part of the way this nasty virus has turned our world upside-down. Thank you for doing your part to keep us all safe!