

GRACEVINE

March 2015



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

747 Ann Street – Chadron, NE 69337

Telephone: (308) 432-5408

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Pastor Ann Sundberg

Cell: (919) 475-9754

Where God is with us as we grow in faith!

Pastor's Message

What is Lent?

Lent is a time of lengthening – and that is the origin of the word. The days are getting longer here in the northern hemisphere. Tree limbs and buried seeds stretch toward the growing light and growing warmth. Our own bodies participate in that lengthening and growth – even if we stopped growing physically years ago. Perhaps we finally get outside and do some exercises, and we feel the muscles that we haven't used begin to stretch and get more limber. Lent lets us stretch and extend ourselves – up toward God and outward toward others.

Lent is a time of deepening. Deepening our trust in God. Deepening our desire for God. Deepening our prayers, deepening our contemplation, deepening our engagement. Like a spade turning the earth to prepare it for the coming planting, we dig deep down into who we are and who God made us to be. Lent spirals downward from ashes to a tomb, and then at the last bursts back up in resurrection.



Lent is a time of practice, in the same way that you practice any skill to get better at it. Sports or sewing or music or driving. We practice our faith during Lent. We lengthen and deepen our faith during Lent. We allow God to lengthen and deepen us during Lent as we concentrate on three traditional Lenten practices: prayer, fasting and giving alms, or charity.

Lenten practices are not for ourselves. Nothing we do will make ourselves more “spiritual” or “righteous” or more visible to God. What Lenten practices are about is the commandment we have been given to love God with all our heart and mind and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

- Loving God in prayer means that we seek to align our own will with God's will. Loving our neighbor in prayer means that when we pray for someone else, we hold their needs up to God before our own.
- Loving God in our fasting means that we allow ourselves to be reminded of our dependence on God for everything we have. Loving our neighbor in our fasting means that we side with other people's hunger and suffering.
- Loving God in giving charity means that we respond in loving gratitude for what God has first given us. Loving our neighbor in our charity means that we use some of our own resources to be of use to those who are in need.

Lent calls us to repent, to turn from all the ways that we focus on ourselves. Lent calls us to love and serve all of God's creation. Lent calls us to become who we were truly created to be by practicing compassion for others. Lent calls us to reflect the light of Christ.

February Council Minutes

Meeting Minutes

Opening

The regular meeting on February 05, 2015 was called to order by President Kit Watson.

Present

Julie Duncan, Karleen Gramberg, Denise James, Yvonne Moody, Pastor Ann Sundberg, Sharon Thurlow and Kit Watson.

Not Present

Robyn Bauquet, Laurie Harris, Melvin High Hawk, and Alyssa Noble.

Devotions

Council Members shared what drew us to be a Lutheran and watched a video “What Does the ELCA Mean to Me?”

Approval of Minutes

Minutes were approved as read. Motion was made by Karleen and Seconded by Jeannie.

Treasurer’s Report was approved. Motion was made by Julie and seconded by Denise.

Pastor’s Report: Pastor spent time preparing for and leading Sunday worship and leading worship at Prairie Pines. She visits regularly with members and visitors. Attended various meetings within the congregation and the community. She also meets regularly with a spiritual director, and plays music at Crestview and Prairie Pines.

Congregational Statistics reported to the ELCA for 2014 included 171 baptized members, 148 confirmed members and 162 “active participants” which means all children and adults, both members and nonmembers, who take part in worship, Bible study, Christian education, youth events, service opportunities, etc. Not all members are active participants.

She participated with the Chadron Ministerial Association to serve lunch at Closer to Home on Mondays in January. Immanuel will serve at Closer to Home the week of March 2-6. Several youth are planning to attend the ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit, MI July 15-19.

Committee Reports

Building and Grounds: Nothing to report.

Education: Looking for committee members and a Youth Leader

Evangelism: No Report

Fellowship: Spaghetti Dinner and Lenten Meals

Social Ministry: No Report

Stewardship: Jeanine pointed out a statement in the video we just watched: “God doesn’t need money. God’s work needs money.”

Worship: No Report

New Business

Moved by Jeannie Mohr and seconded by Yvonne Moody to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with NCAP covering RSVP for volunteer assistance with the Shepherd’s Pantry.

Checkout: Prayers as requested by Council Members and the Lord’s Prayer.

Minutes submitted by:

Sharon Thurlow



Lenten Schedule

Ash Wednesday Service—Wednesday, February 18th - 7:00 p.m.

Midweek suppers and service:
Supper 6:15 p.m. in the fellowship hall
Service 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary

Wednesday, February 25th
Wednesday, March 4th
Wednesday, March 11th
Wednesday, March 18th
Wednesday, March 25th

Palm Sunday—Sunday, March 29th - 9:00 a.m.
Passover Seder Dinner—Wednesday, April 1st - time TBA
Maundy Thursday—Thursday, April 2nd - 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday—Friday, April 3rd - 7:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday—Sunday, April 5th 9:00 a.m.

Lenten Dinners

Don't forget the Lenten Dinners. A sign-up sheet to provide dinner during the Wednesday's of Lent (February 18-March 25) is posted on the kitchen door. Easy and simple is all it takes. Work together as a family or with friends. Thank you in advance for your help.

Easter Lilies

Please sign up to provide Easter lilies for Easter morning, April 5th. A sheet is posted on the kitchen door.



Shepherd's Pantry

What is God's plan for us? God's Work, Our Hands. What should our hands be doing? This is the question Pastor Ann is challenging each of us to think about.

We have the opportunity to think about the future of the Shepherd's Pantry. After 35 years of amazing service, Junice Dagen, Bev Stitt and Linda Morgan are resigning from the Pantry, effective May 31st.

We have a lot of things to consider – and we need your ideas and suggestions. Please pray and give careful thought to the following questions:

1. Do we continue the Shepherd's Pantry as it is today?
 - A. If we continue the Pantry, are you willing to give your time to serve?
 - B. What are you willing to commit to?
2. Is there another way we can provide food to the community?
3. Should we be serving our community in a different way?

Feel free to share your thoughts by contacting Pastor Ann or Robyn Baquet. Or come to the Round Table discussions at the round tables during coffee on March 15th.

God's Work, Our Hands...

Thank You from DOVES

Pastor Ann delivered personal care items that were donated to the church to the DOVES office in Scottsbluff during February. This thank you note was received from their office.

Dear Immanuel Lutheran Church Members:

The DOVES Program would like to sincerely thank you for your wonderful donation. We truly appreciate and are honored with your support, kindness and generosity more than words can say. Thank you again so much and have a wonderful and Blessed Day.

Sincerely,
Your Friends at The DOVES Program



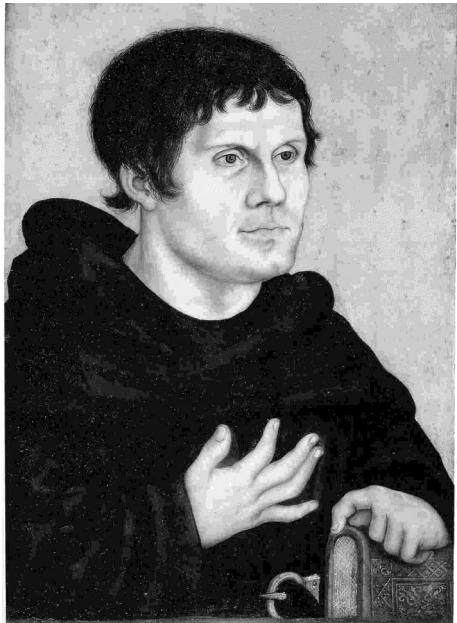
Invitation to Join the Birthday Coffee Group



The Immanuel Lutheran Church Birthday Coffee Group meets the second Monday of each month at 9:00am for fellowship and signing of birthday cards for Immanuel's members and friends. They would like to invite all congregation members and their family and friends to join them for this special ministry of the church. The group usually meets for just one hour and has a wonderful time together. Please consider joining this group. For more information call the church office at (308) 432-5408. The next meeting will be March 9th at 9:00am. See you there!

Wednesday School and Confirmation Spring/Lent Schedule

Wednesday School students will meet from 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm for their lesson. The Wednesday School students and the Confirmation students will share a supper meal from 6:15 pm to 6:45 pm. Confirmation students will have class from 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm during the season of Lent and then return to 6:45 pm to 7:45pm after Lent.



Adult Catechism Class Forming

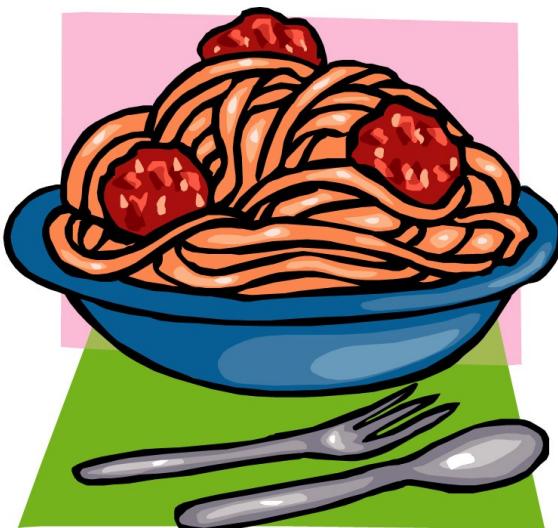
Pastor Ann will teach a class for any adults who wish to learn more about what Lutheran's believe by studying Luther's Small Catechism. The class will be scheduled on Sunday mornings following worship at 10:45am from February 22-March 22. If you are interested, please speak to Pastor Ann.

Thank You!

THANK YOU to all who donated food for the Annual Sweetheart Spaghetti Dinner which was held at the church on Sunday, February 15, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. We served about 40 people and raised \$326.00.

We appreciate everyone who came to support our fundraiser and made monetary donations. For all that came to our Sweetheart Spaghetti Dinner, we hope you had an enjoyable evening of good food and fellowship!

High School and Middle School youth



Treasurer's Report

February 2015

Beginning balance January 31, 2015	\$ (3,965.75)
Income Weekly Offering	\$ 6,834.50
Fair Trade/Coffee/tea sales	\$ 9.25
Thrivent	\$ 553.00
Lenten Offering	\$ 294.00
Lenten Meal	\$ 24.50
Interest checking	\$.09
Total Income	\$ 7,715.34
Expenses	\$ 9,808.62
Ending balance as of February 28, 2015	\$ (6,059.03)

Worship Attendance

Date	Sunday Service
February 1	49
February 8	51
February 15	46
February 22	58

New Members

We rejoice to welcome those individuals and families who joined Immanuel Lutheran Church on January 18th:

Ron and Marcia Bairn

Don and Melissa Churchill and daughters Murphy Churchill and True Thorne

Tiffany Hendrix

Melvin High Hawk

Jeff and Staci Larson and daughter Mali

Garry and Alyssa Peters and children Emma, Matthew and Carter

Jerry Smith, husband of Karen Claussen-Smith

Immanuel Lutheran Church
747 Ann Street
Chadron, NE 69337

COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Kit Watson
Vice-President - Denise James
Secretary - Sharon Thurlow
Treasurer - Laurie Harris
Building & Grounds - Melvin High Hawk
Education - Yvonne Moody
Evangelism - Laurie Schmidt
Fellowship - Karleen Gramberg
Social Ministry - Robyn Baquet
Stewardship - Jeanine Mohr
Worship - Julie Duncan
Youth/Young Adult - Alyssa Noble
Youth/Young Adult - to be appointed
Pastor - Ann Sundberg

Other Staff -

Financial Secretary - Lorrie Bauer
Custodian - Michelle Haynes
Church Secretary - Whitney Tewahade

Important contact information:

Nebraska Synod Website:
www.nebraskasynod.org, phone number
402-896-5311

ELCA Church wide Website: www.elca.org,
phone number 800-638-3522