



# Gracevine



God's Purpose for Immanuel Lutheran Church is to WELCOME and EMBRACE one another in God's love, and to SERVE and SEEK JUSTICE for those in need.

March 2017

## Pastor's Message

During this Lenten season, we make a 40-day journey with Jesus and his disciples to the cross. The traditional disciplines of Lent are:

**Fasting**, in which we refrain from eating, drinking or doing something that we find has become an obsession;

**Almsgiving**, or charitable giving, in which we practice generous, even sacrificial giving of our money, time, and talent to the needs of our neighbors and the world;

**Prayer**, in which we make a conscious practice of coming before God both to intercede for others and to listen for God's voice in our own lives.

### March: Centering Prayer

Father Richard Rohr defines "prayer" as "...any interior journey or practice that allows you to experience faith, hope and love within yourself. It is not a technique for getting things, a pious exercise that somehow makes God happy, or a requirement for entry into heaven. Prayer is much more practicing heaven now." (from Father Rohr's daily meditation on Feb. 7, 2017)

In the Christian tradition contemplative prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the open-

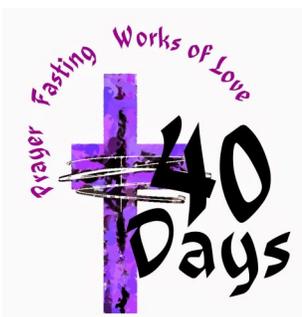
ing of mind and heart - our whole being - to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. It does not replace other ways of praying, but rather casts a new light on them.

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within. "Jesus", "God", "Shalom", or "Peace" are examples.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts (including body sensations, feelings, images and reflections) return ever so gently to the sacred word.

4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with your eyes closed for a couple of minutes. Finally, offer thanks to God for the time you have spent together.

As you begin, try this for 10 minutes and gradually work your way up to 20 or 30 minutes.

We have an opportunity to learn and experience Centering Prayer on Thursday, March 9 at 7:00 pm at Grace Episcopal Church. Brother James Dowd, a member of the Order of the Holy Cross (a Benedictine monastic community in the Episcopal Church), will offer an introduction and the opportunity to practice. All are welcome. I hope you will join me.



## Thank You!

The high school and confirmation students would like to thank everyone who came to our Sweetheart Spaghetti Dinner on Sunday, February 12th. We had

about 30 people attend our fundraiser, and raised almost \$400.00 for our youth account which is used to help fund camps, mission trips, and national youth

gatherings. So again, THANK YOU for the continued support this congregation gives to our youth fundraisers. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.



# Treasurer's Report:

February 2017

Beginning Balance:		\$9,628.62
Income	Weekly Offering	\$9,095.76
	MIF Interest	\$ 0.00
	Interest	\$ 0.31
	Thrivent	\$ 838.00
Expenses		\$ (13,046.65)
Ending balance as of February 28, 2017		\$6,516.04



## Council Meeting Minutes:

Immanuel Lutheran church council met on February 12th with Pastor Ann Sundberg, Robyn Baquet, Denise James, Kim Bradley, Uati Paopao, Laurie Schmidt, Kit Watson, Hannah Norgard and Sharon Thurlow attending. Absent were Yvonne Moody, Barb Landen, Karen Rupp and Leila Tewahade.

There was conversation about the updates to the Constitution.

Karen Rupp, Robyn Baquet, Laruie Schmidt and Pastor Ann are attending transformational ministry training, offered by the Nebraska Synod.

Devotions were from Matthew concerning being the Salt of the Earth.

The minutes were approved as presented with a motion to approve by Hannah and seconded by Laurie.

Motion to approve the treasurers report as presented by Kit & seconded by Hannah.

Pastor's Report: Participation in Seeking the Spirit Within for congregation and individuals. Wednesday school continues to grow and has a lively group..

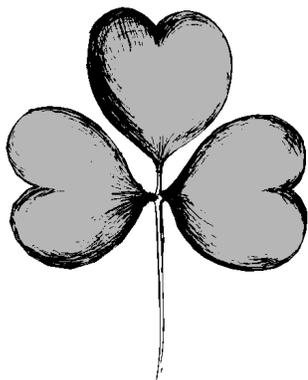
Building and Grounds- Our new custodian is Melissa Churchill.

Our president asked that all committees look at the entire year's calendar so that nothing sneaks up on us and we are prepared. There will be a Lenten meal every Wednesday prior to the mid-week service. Our devotions for the season will focus on the Small Catechism. Check Facebook and the church's website to see what is going on at Immanuel.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted.

Sharon Thurlow



# STEWARDSHIP:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday Jan. 22, Epiphany 4, we heard from the prophet Micah 6: 8 (New International Version (NIV) *8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you?*

**To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly<sup>[a]</sup> with your God.**

At our annual congregation meeting that day we approved a new mission statement “God’s purpose for Immanuel Lutheran Church is to WELCOME and EMBRACE one another in God’s love and to SERVE and SEEK JUSTICE for those in need. Our new identity reflected in this statement coheres nicely with God’s mandate in Micah and with our Stewardship focus = love the Lord God who all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.

We also approved our mission plan (aka budget) for 2017 – a leap of faith that we will be able to increase our income to make it happen and live into our identity through good stewardship and financial management. We invite you to please prayerfully consider what % of income you can commit to help meet our budget. If you filled out a commitment card, we thank you. If you haven’t completed one, you can still do that...just complete it and place in our collection plates during the offering. If you need a card, please let the church office know. We invite our young people to save their coins to place in the weekly “noisy offering.”

We thank you all for sharing what you can...of your time, your talents and your resources, gifts God has first given us. Thank you for sharing in our ministry, in our mission. We’ll be providing a time & talents survey form for you to complete so

we can have a better idea of on what ways you’d most like to participate

## Upcoming Book Study Opportunities:

Sign-up sheets will be available at church or you can e-mail me at

[karn.rupp@gmail.com](mailto:karn.rupp@gmail.com) or the contact the church office.

*STEWARDSHIP* by Bob Sitze: The collective groan that greets stewardship campaigns in most churches can be quelled. This book offers theoretical and practical propositions by which lay and clergy leaders can ensure the sustainability of stewardship ministries to help their congregations flourish. Bob Sitze invites stewardship leaders into a broader conversation of how shifted biblical and secular stewardship concepts, practice, and identity can be incorporated into a congregation's life and help bring about lasting change. The book has two sections: Part 1, Scriptural Stewardships, reinterprets familiar biblical passages on stewardship, introduces new ones, and helps congregations expand their use of the Bible in their life and stewardship work. Part 2, Secular Stewardships, examines the resources that are available to congregations from the "continuing revelation" that is occurring in the secular world, including brain science, financial planning, philanthropy, community organizing, and other areas. The book is written in a friendly style, with reflection questions, so-what moments, and engaging sidebars.

*ANATOMY OF GRACE*: Combining lively prose and creative insight, pastor and radio host **Peter W. Marty** probes the intricacies of daily human experience and invites readers to reconsider their faith lives with fresh eyes. In this collection of reflections from a pastoral heart, Marty carefully slices the contours of divine grace and views them in micro- and mac-

roscopic fashion for the sake of appreciating the magnificence of the body of Christ - the church. *The Anatomy of Grace* takes well-worn religious language from another era and refashions it into powerful speech for the twenty-first century Christian. Organized around the themes of serendipitous grace, unobtrusive grace, ordinary grace, surprising grace, mysterious grace, and weightless grace, the work is both a treatise on living the Christian life well and a stirring reminder of why congregational life matters so significantly in America.

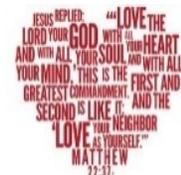
## Some Environmental Stewardship Suggestions:

- Take shorter showers and lower temperatures to conserve water. Turn off water while brushing teeth.
- Reduce use of plastic...use reusable cloth bags for groceries.
- Run clothes washer and dryers for shortest cycles possible and lowest water temp possible do full loads – same for dishwashers.
- Recycle.
- Lower thermostat a few degrees and wear heavier clothes.

Your ideas are welcome – share your suggestions/best practices with us.

Again, thank you for all you do. Please consider volunteering to join the Stewardship Committee – just speak to Karen Rupp, Jeanine Mohr or Pastor Ann.

Peace and Blessings,  
Karen Rupp, Stewardship Chair



Immanuel Lutheran Church  
747 Ann Street  
Chadron, NE 69337

## COUNCIL MEMBERS:

President– Robyn Baquet  
Vice President– Denise James  
Secretary– Sharon Thurlow  
Treasurer– Kim Bradley  
Building & Grounds– Uati Paopao  
Education– Yvonne Moody  
Evangelism– Laurie Schmidt  
Fellowship– Kit Watson  
Social Ministry– Barb Landen  
Stewardship– Karen Rupp  
Worship– Hannah Norgard  
Youth/Young Adult– Leila Tewahade  
Pastor– Ann Sundberg

### Other Staff:

Financial Secretary– Lorrie Bauer  
Custodian– Melissa Churchill  
Church Secretary– Amy Jones

### *Important contact information-*

**Church Office Phone: 308.432.5408**  
**Pastor Ann Sundberg's Cell: 919.475.9754**  
**Church email: [chadimmanuel@bbc.net](mailto:chadimmanuel@bbc.net)**  
**Church website: [www.chadimmanuel.org](http://www.chadimmanuel.org)**  
Nebraska Synod Website:  
[www.nebraskasynod.org](http://www.nebraskasynod.org), phone number  
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