From the Pastor

Stained Glass – How can we not love the warmth and the glow of stained-glass windows? Growing up mostly at Incarnation Lutheran Church, I was, and still am, captured by the massive and beautifully crafted stained-glass windows that grace the worship space. Six frames on each side of the nave with three panels in each frame. The windows are massive fourteen – sixteen feet high. The colors are staggering as they come together to share with us the span of the Old and New Testaments. Whether it was a specific figure or an event within the Bible, what it illustrates is the activity of God on the world of humanity. However, in order to appreciate the windows, you have to be on the inside of the church, which is standard for stained-glass windows. It is only from the inside that you are afforded the richness of the colors and the vitality and energy of the story that they share with us. Again, you have to be on the inside. Now, from the outside the results are quite different, you get these muted and dull colors that share very little of the story with us and if there are words to be shared with us, from the outside, they are backwards. Everything is designed for the benefit of those on the inside.

However, what if we were to light up the inside of the church at night for those traveling down the dark roads at night? What would happen if this story is proclaimed to the world in the midst of the night for all who pass by to see. Think of it, there in the dark and/or rain is this story for all to see, the story of God’s engagement with humanity. Stories of grace and love that speak to us in the night.

With this, might we consider the effect that would befall the world if the light were shining from inside us? What if the light, the light of Christ, the light that resides within us was bursting forth from us so that we might be that beacon of hope in the storm. We are called to be the light of Christ for the world to see and recognize. In someone’s darkest moments, might we be the light that shares with them the story of God’s love and grace found in the person of Jesus Christ? We are called to color the world and bathe it with God’s eternal glory. Be the light.

God’s peace, and the love of Christ be with you,
Pastor Rusty
UN-MASK YOUR FAITH

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16

Today, and probably for the long-term future, we are required to wear a mask to participate in any activities outside of our homes, even to worship in church. The reason for this is obviously due to the Covid 19 pandemic so that we are protected, and we protect others from the spread of the viral infection. In this sense, we are using the word “mask” as a noun, i.e. a covering made of fabric to protect against dust or air pollutants or to prevent the infection of the wearer or patient. In this month’s article, I want to address the wearing of a mask as a verb, i.e. to conceal something from view. In other words, wearing a mask to cover and conceal our faith from the view of others.

As stated in Matthew 5:16, we are to reveal, or un-mask, our faith and glory in God by our actions. We should not mask our faith because we are afraid or embarrassed of what others may think of us. We should be willing to reveal the glory of God so that others may seek and experience the same splendor and majesty of our Lord that we do. Our unmasking can be accomplished in any number of ways. However, praying is probably the greatest demonstration of faith that we can do for and with one another. There has probably not been a greater need for prayer in our lifetime than right now. As we look around, we see that chaos, calamity, and strife is everywhere. The best way to find solace and unity is if we all ask God to help us in this time of need. When we engage in our conversations with God, we do so because we know God listens and because we believe. We have trust and confidence that God is going to see us through these difficult times, and we will come out stronger in the end. Sharing our faith with others will help guide us and them through the troubles of today with the promise of life everlasting with our Father in heaven.

Un-mask yourself with your thoughts, words, and deeds and be willing to let others view God through your faith.

“You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works.”
James 2:22

Your Sister in Christ,
Kim Leemhuis, Council President
When I began studying the organ, one of the areas of focus was on hymn playing. There was much to learn about this task, and I gleaned a lot of information from teachers and workshop presenters on the subject. Some commented on the importance of using a variety of sounds in accompanying different verses, some commented that tempos and volumes needed to change according to the text. Some exhorted us to “lead the God’s people in song” and others said, “Let the people sing!” One presenter, however, mentioned that hymn playing was about “serving the neighbor.” I gave much thought to this idea, and felt that of all of the directives, this one was the most important. Everything we do as organists is about inspiring others to praise God in song. We attempt in our introductions to “invite the people” to praise. We accompany in such a way that we give people little breaks in sound where there are commas and periods in the hymn texts, so that people have places to breathe. You may have noticed that at the ends of verses, your organists holds that last note a little longer than you may expect. This extension has a purpose. It does not mean that you as a singer have to hold the last note that long. This extension is designed to give you time to swallow between verses! The last verse generally has more variety to hopefully propel you along at the end of the journey. The whole idea here is to play the hymn in a way that it would make it easier for me to sing, and I frequently find that I do, and it works better for you as a singer in the nave if I do that.

Our featured composer this month is Jeffrey Honoré. He graduated magna cum laude from University of Wisconsin, Parkside in 1980 with a degree in K-12 choral education. Since 1984, he has served as choir director in Roman Catholic parishes and received the Vatican II award for Distinguished Service in 1999. He composes arrangements for organ, choir and hand bells, and many of his organ arrangements have been published by Augsburg Fortress, which your organist uses to choose voluntaries. These organ arrangements include “Healer of Our Every Ill, Now Thank We All Our God, and You Satisfy the Hungry Heart.”

I also have exciting news to share! Starting September 16:

Handbell Quartet will meet in the nave on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. We have enough people so far for one quartet. We will observe social distancing and wear masks as we play.

Choir members have an opportunity to rehearse via Google Meet. This method is a way for us to enjoy our music together without risking infections. Music packets are available for pick up in the choir room. For those of you who aren’t attending, please send me an email or leave a message at the church and I’ll mail the music to you. We will not be singing anthems for worship, but it will be good to learn these so we can readily sing them when we return to normal circumstances. These sessions will also involve music reading lessons and vocal lessons as well, so it’s an opportunity for you to grow in other ways.

Emily
How is Guatemala? Fiesta Success!

Thanks to everyone who supported the Fiesta de Guatemala this year. Several of you donated baked goods, bread or jam for the bake sale as well. The best part though was seeing many of you who I hadn’t seen in months! Special thanks to Lindsey Peralta for her loyal help with the Fiesta each year. She’s taken on the role of securing and preparing all the food. I could never pull this event off without her! With outright donations included, we raised a little over $8500. That will certainly help as I strive to raise enough this year not only to send $50,000 to operate the school in 2021 but an additional $250,000 to purchase land for a permanent facility. I’m almost ½ way to the second goal. If you’d like to help with the later, give me a call. Believe me, I need all the help I can get with this latest task from God. Be looking for an opportunity to help with via a donation soup takeout event Lindsey and I plan to host. Thought you’d like to see some pictures from the school this month.

Lynn Isenhower, Matthew 2540 Ambassador

Wish list link: Amazon wish list link

Pastor Erika and Sara prepare to hand out learning packets.

Older students pick up their learning packets.

Pastor Erika delivering a DVD player and learning packet to a lower school student and his mom.

Teachers gather to deliver packets to their students.
Ladies of SC WELCA

On behalf of SC WELCA I invite you to support this year’s convention project by making masks for the children receiving services through the Children’s Advocacy Centers across the state. Our goal is to provide as many masks as we can, but the centers can use up to 500 per month! These are very simple masks and the instructions are below. This project will continue until our convention next summer. If you would be willing to make masks, please let me know and I will be happy to provide fabric and elastic. We have received Action funds from Thrivent, thanks to Carolyn and Melvin Mooney.

If sewing is not one of your talents, we ask you to support our project by praying that these children who may face very scary circumstances already are kept safe during this global crisis. We are in this together, and by God’s grace and love we are called to serve His children.

Peace and hope,
Becky

How to Make a Child’s Mask

For ages 4-12 – You need two pieces of cotton fabric measuring 5” x 7” and 2 pieces of 1/8” elastic measuring 6” long.

1. Pin elastic about ½” from corners of short side of front side of one fabric.
2. Lay the other piece of the fabric right side facing down and pin all the way around.
3. Sew both pieces of fabric together all the way around. Leave about 2” open so you can turn it inside out.
4. Turn inside out. Fold down the opening and top sew closed.
5. Now, do two pleats in the center of sides of mask. The pleats are about 1” each.
6. Pin the pleats and sew sides. That’s it! You are done.

Men in Mission

Immanuel Lutheran's Men in Mission will meet on Saturday, September 12th in the Old Fellowship Hall, beginning at 8:30 a.m. We will have coffee, fellowship and devotions; followed by a treasurer's report and program discussion. Please wear your masks. We will adjourn from our meeting to the Fellowship Center around 9:30 a.m. The Church is holding an estate auction there, beginning at 10 a.m. for those who are interested. I hope to see you at the meeting!

Charles Hershey
President LMIM

Fall Church Picnic

We are rescheduling the church picnic from September 20 to Sunday, October 18. We were able to get Shelter #1 which allows us to have access to playground equipment, shallow water for swimming, a dock for boats, and a grassy area for activities. Hopefully, we can use this as a getting back together day for our congregation. Be on the lookout for more details as we get closer to the date.
Stewardship
If you worship at home or in person, you still have the opportunity to worship God through your offerings. On your envelope if you wish to designate to a special cause, simply list it on the front of the offering envelope. There is no need to write multiple checks.

There are three special appeals taking place.
1. The Parlor Fund- The parlor has been updated with new paint and furnishings. If you would like to contribute, simply make your envelope "Parlor Fund".
2. Love One Another Campaign- Lutheran Family Services appeal to raise funds for many special projects including Kinard Manor.
3. Abundancia Appeal- SC Synod Appeal to provide new resources to expand Latino Ministry in the SC synod and to establish an endowment for future maintenance of the Cristo Rey Sanctuary.

John Kinard

Columbarium Niches
Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

One of the most thoughtful things that we can do for our families is make the necessary arrangements in our final journey to the church triumphant. Part of those final arrangements involves where we wish our final resting place to be. If you have considered cremation, I want to share with you that the expansion to the columbarium here at Immanuel Lutheran Church is complete and those niches are now available. Each niche is designed to hold two sets of cremains under normal circumstances. Each niche is available for $1000.00 and this includes the cost of the engraving. The cost per niche does not change regardless of whether there are one or two sets of cremains and payments can be made over the course of one year. If you desire to make use of the columbarium, please see Pastor Rusty.

Lutheran Men and Mission and Camp Kinard
Greetings to the men of the church! There will be a workday at Camp Kinard on October 3rd. Camp Kinard has long been a retreat spot for Lutherans across the state and beyond. Camp Kinard is in the process of working toward the future with an expansion project that will serve our church as a place retreat and gathering. The affected areas have been cleared and we are calling on the men of the church body to gather for a workday of additional cleanup of debris. Lunch will be served – and we ask you to join us for the greater good of the SC Synod and the South Carolina Lutheran Retreat Centers. Times will follow in a global email. The backup rain day contention will be October 10th. If you have questions, or to confirm your participation, please contact Pastor Rusty.

Roadside Clean Up
Our next quarterly roadside clean up takes place on Saturday, September 19th. Meet at the church at 9am. All supplies will be provided and no experience is necessary. Please email David Rosenbaum (dr_scvarolina@yahoo.com) if you are available to assist or with any questions.
Learning Committee Update

Summer VBS

The pandemic did not stop our vacation bible school from happening! It just changed the way we delivered it. Eight sessions that included Paige providing story time, Emily teaching songs and Pastor Rusty providing a message were posted on Immanuel’s public FaceBook page. Resources, crafts, and snacks were sent to thirteen children who are members or grandchildren and friends of members. We encourage you to check out these virtual sessions. You are never too old to enjoy VBS!

Fall Learning Opportunities

Adult Sunday School will begin on Sunday, September 13th. John Kinard and Chuck Howells will lead a book study on In A Pit With A Lion On A Snowy Day by Mark Batterson.

Time: 9:45-10:45
Location: Old Fellowship Hall

If you are interested in the book, please let John or the church office know so that we can order the appropriate number of books.

Children’s programs are still in the planning stages. Parents, please share your ideas and thoughts with a member of the Learning Team.

A fall children’s ministry is being planned for a drive-through “Trick or Treat” event. Stay tuned for details.

Bible Study continues with Pastor Rusty on Tuesdays at 1:30 and Thursday at 6:15.

If you have ideas for learning opportunities that you would feel comfortable participating in during these times of uncertainty, please let a member of the Learning Team know. We are looking at different ways to deliver bible studies, book studies, children’s music program and Sunday School, but we need your input on what you would like to participate in. Please reach out to one of the following: DeeDee Kehl, Paige Johnson, Dorothy Zahn, Emily Wallace, Zeolean Kinard.

A Friend in Need

My name is Fred McDowell and I need a kidney transplant. Kidney failure prevents me from living a normal life. I have been on dialysis for almost 3 years since my diagnosis which means I spend approximately 4 hours three days each week for a total of 12 hours per week tied to a dialysis machine. My wife recently retired after 48 years of teaching nursing and we were looking forward to travelling after her retirement. Getting a kidney transplant would help me to lead a more normal life including community service which I dearly love. A kidney transplant also would enable us to travel out of state to see family and friends rather than having to stay local so I can be here for dialysis. My overall physical health would improve with a kidney transplant also. Please consider being a living kidney donor. For more information about donating a kidney to me, contact Augusta University Health at augustahealth.org/transplant and click on “Become a Living Donor”. Shelby Adams, the Living Donor Coordinator at Augusta University Health, can be reached at 706-721-8560 about donating a kidney to me.

Jackie Godson Estate Sale

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I wanted to share with you that there will be an estate sale held here at Immanuel Lutheran Church on September 12th. The sale will be opened up to the members of Immanuel Lutheran Church and members of the Soup Kitchen, with whom Jackie served for so many years, at 9:00 and then opened to the public 10:00 and conclude at 12:00. I have been appointed as the Personal Representative by the Probate Courts of Greenwood and this sale is being held with the approval of Church Council and Jackie’s sister, Mrs. Welch. After all accounts are settled, any left-over monies are designated to Immanuel Lutheran programs.

Pastor Rusty
Prayer List

Please remember the following individuals in your prayers throughout the month.

Those in need of healing:

Those in the military:
Daniel Darling, Chase Robinson, and Devin Rosenbaum

Those with long term needs:
- At NHC: Pastor Earl McCombs, Room #357
- At Wesley Commons: Corine Klein, Jeanne Shealy, and Ingrid Ware

Birthdays and Anniversaries

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