



# The Immanuel Herald

Publication of Immanuel United Church of Christ

**August 2025**

## Pastor's Corner

### A Message from Pr. MaryBeth

#### FAITH IN ACTION: FOUND IN SCRIPTURE

"Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." ~ Isaiah 1:17

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."  
~ Proverbs 31:8-9

"For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'"  
~ Matthew 25:42-45

"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"  
~ I John 3:17-18

The work of the church is to engage in acts of charity. As followers of Christ we are also called to work against systems making that charity necessary.



Sometimes the Bible readings for any given Sunday seem like a mixture of religion and politics, spirituality and activism. Yet, if we know scripture at all, we discover that as People of Faith we absolutely must speak out on behalf of the vulnerable: the sick and hungry, the stranger, the lost and grieving, the fearful and hopeless.

It won't be long before our neighbors, school children, the elderly ~ folks who receive help to put food on the table, folks who rely on Medicaid for health ~ care ~ will soon find themselves having to choose between paying for housing or health care, skipping dinner or skipping the utility bill.

How can we help? Call your State and Federal elected officials; write a postcard; march in a rally; volunteer at the food pantry or at the children's hospital. How can Immanuel speak up and advocate for justice?

*As always, your friend in Christ,  
Pr. MaryBeth*

## Notes from the President

It's a silent night. My cat is sleeping, breathing quietly, in..out, in...out. Outside, the night sky is clear. A whisper disturbs my peace. My cat stirs, twitches his ears. "Do you hear what I hear," I asked? On this midnight clear, I heard a voice whisper "Write, bring joy to the world."

Our congregants come in smiling. Sadly, at times, some may come carrying a burden on their shoulders. But soon, their smiles shine through as their burdens are eased. I love our Immanuel family. How we help each other go from Blue Christians to Holly Jolly Christians.

I witness Art, John and Glen discussing some issue that needs resolution. We're blessed to have these three wise men. They are the brightest star in our sky.



It's August, our service is in progress. Glancing around, something is missing. No children! Where are they? Relax, they are not away in a manger. They are in Sunday School with our volunteer teachers. Thank you for giving our regular teachers a rest.

Maggie's garden is blooming. No holly or mistletoe but plenty of peppers and onions. Thank you all who planted and to Jim who makes sure it stays hydrated. The plants must believe he's Santa Claus.

Immanuel is awaiting a blessed event. Soon, silver bells will be ringing. A child is born. A new beginning. Be it day or be it night, the baby will bring a Holy Night to remember.

Are you thinking about Christmas? I wanted that. Yearly, Around December 26, many start to think "why can't Christmas be everyday?" In today's world, unfortunately, with the unsettledness, rivalries, and misfortunes going on, we need Christmas' love and compassion. We need love and compassion every day. Not just one day or one season. Imagine what a wonderful world we could have if every day was Christmas.

Let us be the change. Help someone. Share a smile with a stranger, see if they share it back to you. Better yet, they may pay it forward. We can do it. Starting today, I will try to bring happiness to all. Come, come all ye faithful, let's make love shine. Are you willing to try? Let's live like Christmas is today and everyday and deliver the gift of love.

BobO

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." ~ Colossians 3:12

## Worship & Friendship at Immanuel AUGUST 2025

Sun. Aug 3, 10am: Worship, Communion  
2pm: "Evergreenia" Concert  
on the lawn, bring a lunch!

Mon. Aug 11, 7pm: Council, Zoom

Sun. Aug 31, 10am: Outdoor Worship  
under the pine tree (good weather)

### August, 10am: Worship

Communion: 1st and 3rd Sundays

Joyful Noise Offering: 2nd Sunday

Please remember to send offering if you  
are away for a summer trip ~ thank you!

Prayers for Safe Travel & Respite

### LOOKING AHEAD

Sun. Sept 7, 10am: **RALLY DAY**  
Worship, Communion, Choir  
and Sunday School recognition



### MISSION, CARE & MEMBERSHIP SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Even though the educators in our  
midst are not ready to begin the  
school year (they still need respite!),  
we'll gather school supplies for the  
school in our district, Evergreen  
Park's Southeast Elementary School.

#### Full list at the website

<https://www.d124.org/our-schools/southeast-school>

10 pack markers, 24 pack crayons,  
#2 pencils sharpened, pink erasers,  
glue sticks, 7" safety scissors, tissues,  
hand sanitizer, wide ruled paper,  
Crayola watercolor set, etc.

## On a Personal Note ...

...from Pr. MaryBeth

### Grateful to Immanuel folks for understanding and acceptance:

As most of you know, my husband,  
Dennis Vail, was diagnosed with  
dementia and aphasia January 2023.  
For at least a year before, he noticed  
that he was forgetting things and  
becoming confused. Family and close  
friends noticed that this most positive  
and kind person had uncharacteristic  
outbursts of frustration.

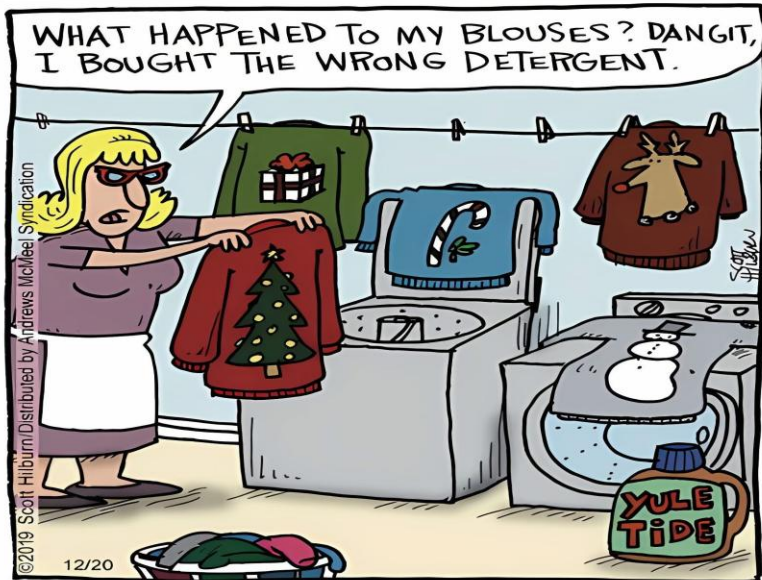
His doctors are wonderful, we have  
a lot of help from family as well as  
caregivers through a combination of  
the Illinois Department on Aging and  
a private elder care provider.

As your pastor, it is important to  
model self-care and so, as often as  
possible, I participate in the support  
group at Smith Village sponsored by  
the Alzheimer's Association. I see a  
counselor once a month whose focus  
is with families dealing with concerns  
related to aging and spirituality.

**Two things:** With God's grace, it's  
important to keep a sense of humor in  
the midst of these challenges. And ~  
Dennis truly loves coming to church  
at Immanuel: he looks forward to the  
music, warm friendships and cookies!







“... and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” ~ Luke 2:9-11

## Christmas in August

A letter from Candy Busse:

As much as I dislike the thought of winter, I have to admit that decorating the church for Advent will be so exciting this year. Long time church member Sue Mueller has done such a wonderful job of refreshing the candelabra, door wreaths and garlands. Sue has generously donated all materials and her time to update all these wonderful decorations.



Sue Mueller



Art, Elsie, Sue and Candy

Art, Elsie and I have enjoyed visiting with Sue while dropping off and picking up these decorations. Advent Decorating will be extra exciting this year.

Thank you so much **Sue** for all your time, talent and creativity.  
Wishing you a wonderful  
**94th Birthday** on **August 12th**,  
you truly are amazing.



***Please Keep These Families in your Prayers:***

Rosemary Davidson	Pam Gross	Melinda Guidino
Dolores and Al Eriksen	Jim O'Toole	Brad Stone
Diane Eriksen	Andy Busse	Karen Wyka
Samantha Hickerson	Dennis Vail	Jackie Moline
Neighbors at Immanuel Residence		



**CROSS KEYS SCHOOL OF IRISH DANCE ~ NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP**



Cross Keys' team won third place overall and school member, Sara, qualified, at 12<sup>th</sup> place, for the 2026 World's Championship! The school won "loads of medals!"

**SOME GOOD CLEAN HUMOR TO ROUND OUT THE SUMMER**

"So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." ~ Luke 11:1-13

A little humor upon hearing this Gospel passage on Sunday, July 27, prompted some wildly (in) appropriate "Knock-Knock" jokes!

**Knock, knock!**  
Who's there?  
**Water.**  
Water who?  
**Water you waiting for? Open the door!**



**Knock, knock!**  
Who's there?  
**Shirley.**  
Shirley who?  
**Shirley you must know who I am by now.**



## THE RIPPLE EFFECT

How often do you consider the ripple effect?  
Do you think about how your actions  
will impact those around you?



Recently I received a text from a past Immanuel member who moved a few hours away numerous years ago. However, Carol Ann did visit our church on October 22, 2023. In her text she informed me that in April 1965 she was diagnosed with a disease that required surgery which made her unable to go back to school until her graduation in June. Her mother, after a Sunday service at Immanuel, gave Carol Ann the church bulletin with a special message in it. Carol Ann still has that message, cut out of that 1965 bulletin and placed in a location so that she is able to view it every day. The message:

*God had not promised skies always blue,  
Flower-strewn pathways all our lives through.  
God has not promised sun without rain,  
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.  
But God has promised strength for the day,  
Rest for the laborer, light on the way,  
Grace for the trial, help from above,  
Unfailing sympathy - undying love.  
(Author unknown)*

Carol Ann's son, visiting from California, just noticed the message. He asked about the saying and Carol Ann shared the history. He then asked if someday she would pass it along to him. Carol Ann thought she would cry, her heart felt so full of love. So she sent a picture of this message cutout of Immanuel's bulletin to me along with her text. Her words: "Sixty years and that small church article is still inspiring!"

What a wonderful story and thank you for sharing Carol Ann.  
I wonder if anyone knows who wrote those words for our church bulletin?



*Our actions are guaranteed to affect others.  
Because we are not alone in this world, much  
of our learning about ourselves comes from  
our interaction with others. Our relationships  
are our teachers. We learn from each other.  
Tae Yun Kim*





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