



The Immanuel Herald

Publication of Immanuel United Church of Christ

August 2026

Pastor's Corner

A Message from Pr. MaryBeth

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose."

~ Romans 8:26-28

Have you ever stopped to realize that you haven't spent some time in prayer; nor paused for a little one-on-one time with the Divine? What about folks who are unable to pray because they're sick or disabled? And what about those times we are angry at God, when we feel the absence of God, when we're no longer on 'speaking terms' with the Divine for any reason at all?

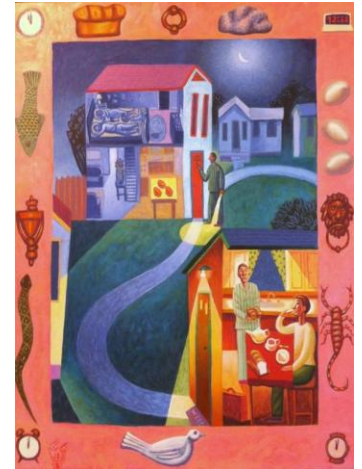
If you're a church-going person (and I hope you are!) at least we, as a community, offer praise to God through singing hymns, participating in the liturgy; we offer our petitions of joy and concern, some of us even come into the sanctuary early for some quiet reflection in 'God's House.'

What does the Apostle Paul mean in his letter to the Romans as he writes, "we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes" for us?

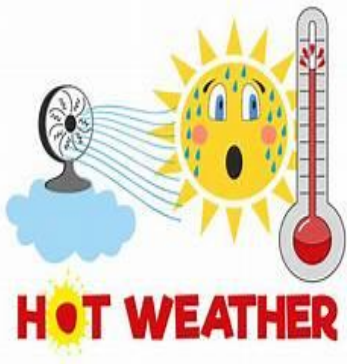
Although 16th Century church Reformer, Martin Luther, wrote, "To be a Christian without *prayer* is no more possible than to be alive without breathing." ~ he also wrote that when believers are weak, afflicted, or at a loss for words, the Holy Spirit inside them intercedes, steps in and prays for us, prays with us. In his Small Catechism, Luther explains that even before we ask, even when we don't ask, God provides sustenance, courage, mercy.

In these summer days, especially, find and take the time to nurture your relationship with the 'Paraclete' the One who stands alongside, the Spirit who intercedes for us, with us no matter our situation or condition. Be intentional and purposeful about your time for prayer.

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



President's Message



Dang, It's Hot ~ More info in September Column.

I wanted to print that sentence as the entire column. Truly, because the heat is really grinding on me (remember, winter lover here) and my nerves are on edge and fragile. I was on the verge of collapse, and then, this happened,

Walking out a door there was a lady pushing a wheelchair coming up behind, so I held the door for them. We got to where she was parked and I saw she was having issues helping the elderly passenger get in, almost dropping her.

I said I will help, and as we started getting the lady up from the chair when another passing lady stopped to help. Seconds later two men walking from the parking lot stopped to see if we needed help. Strangers us all, yet we all saw someone in need and took time to help. And we all left quietly wishing each other a pleasant day.



That combined act of kindness and love showed me that I shouldn't gripe and get worked up in a frenzy, nay, I need to open my eyes and look for the beauty in life and then bathe in its cool waters of kindness, hope and love.

Where do I and where can you find this cooling spa of love. Why, I found it at Immanuel UCC. Fellow members ready to help each other in need. There is truth in all of our loving and sincere smiles. You will feel the cooling power of hope and love the instant you step on our property. Come, Immanuel, so hot it's cool!

BobO

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Romans 15:13

Worship & Friendship at Immanuel AUGUST 2026

Sun. Aug. 2, 10am: Worship, Communion

Sun. Aug. 9, 10am: Worship, *Joyful Noise*

Mon. Aug. 10, 7pm: Council, Zoom

Sun. Aug. 16, 10am: Worship, Communion

Rev. Nathan Houstin, Guest Preacher

Sun. Aug. 23, 10am: Worship

Rev. Nathan Houstin, Guest Preacher

Sun. Aug. 30, 10am: Worship



Kindland
JUST BE ♥ KIND®

Remember Kindness always,
though the project is until December 31.

**The Kindness Project is co-sponsored
by the United Church of Christ.**

250 Days of Kindness.

When asked what the greatest
commandment is, Jesus said,
the first is to love God and the second is
to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Kindness is love in action.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

The hope is to fill America with the
message of kindness that is always
our shared strength.

**HOW CAN WE SHARE OUR ACTIONS AND
OFFER NEW IDEAS?**

Forest Fires Prompt a Conversation

Because of the intense and immense wildfires in Minnesota and Canada that brought so much smoke and ash into our communities in July, Herald editors, Deb Venhuizen and Pr. MaryBeth had some thoughts and decided to share.

Pr. MaryBeth's Friday email, July 17:

"Climate change .. When a hole in the ozone above earth was increasing, the global community came together in the 1987 Montreal Protocol to ban the destructive chemicals. By 2040 most of the ozone will be healed."

**Deb writes: "Pastor's Friday email
on July 17 got me thinking..."**

"In the 1970s, researchers warned that these substances, used in refrigerators, aerosols, and other products, were breaking down ozone molecules in the stratosphere. I remember they talked about banning aerosols: no more hair spray? We did use a lot of hair spray in the early '70's and before. It's kind of like the metric system which in 1974 we were told we were going to use exclusively. What a joke! You can tell what we export because we use the metric system for those items. There are only 3 countries in the world that do not use the metric system: **United States, Liberia, and Myanmar (Burma)**"

Meanwhile, there are **no countries** that did **not** sign or ratify the Montreal Protocol. It has achieved universal ratification with **198** ratifiers, making it the first and only treaty in United Nations history to be signed and ratified by every single recognized country on Earth.

Please Keep These Families in your Prayers:

Rosemary Davidson
Jim O'Toole
Jackie Moline
Samantha Hickerson
Bruce Venhuizen

Pam Gross
Karen Wyka
Jorrie Pitts
Shirley Mikolaitis, family
Allen Eriksen, Diane Eriksen, Linda Barrios

Christine Hickerson
Lois Murphy, family
Gary Hickerson



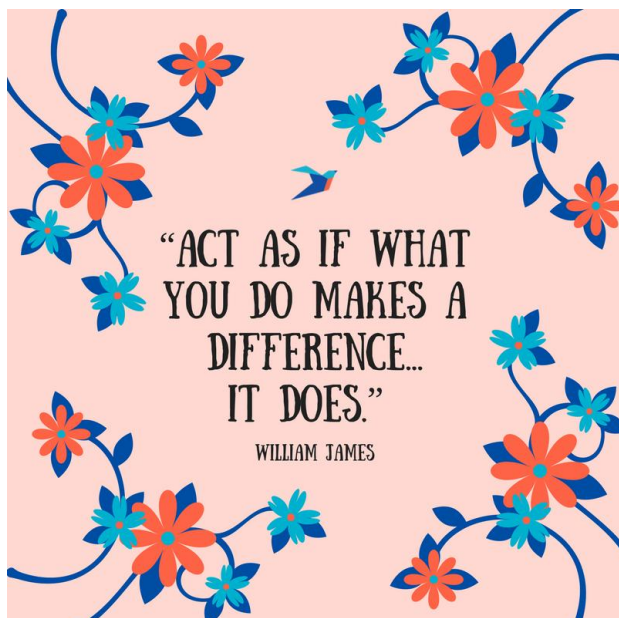
**2026 Fall Ball
Hot Shots Basketball**

Information about the 2026 season of Hot Shots Fall Ball will be available in late August. Please consider signing up to help in the concession stand once the season starts.

~ Thank You ~



Our **Hot Shots** basketball program is one of the primary sources of funding that supports the mission of Immanuel Church within our community and the wider reach of the United Church of Christ.



Mission, Care and Membership

AUGUST



School Supplies for the children at Evergreen Park's Southeast Elementary.

As soon as they go on sale, bring your donations into church and place them in the donation bin. Monetary gifts welcome, to Immanuel, designate 'SE School' Thanks!!

Mission, Care and Membership

On June 20, 2026, a lucky thirteen members and friends of Immanuel packed manna packs at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora. Thirty-six children in Madagascar will be fed healthy meals for a year due to the work of today's volunteers. Our **donation of \$372.67** will help even more.



And we all got attractive hairnets as a bonus!



"FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING TO EAT."

Matthew 25:35

FMSC is a Christian nonprofit organization: Jesus Christ calls us to feed the hungry and serve those in need. FMSC strives to eliminate malnutrition and starvation in children throughout the world by helping to instill compassion toward the cries of those in need until all are fed.



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