

# Immanuel Lutheran Church

## August 2016

### Messenger



Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Called, Empowered, and Sent by God to Live, Love, and Learn God's Word  
Nuestra Declaración De Misión  
Somos llamados, autorizados, y enviados por Dios para vivir, amar, y aprender la Palabra de Dios  
**Pastor John Okan**  
360-592-5876  
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Immanuel Lutheran Church  
5782 Lawrence Rd.  
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**Dear People of Immanuel,**

*I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, (1 Corinthians 1:4)*

These words are found in the greeting and salutation at the beginning of Paul's letter to the Corinthians. As we celebrate our 125 years and continue into our 126<sup>th</sup> year and beyond, it is hard not to look to such inspirational words, to have our mouths and hearts filled with praise and thanksgiving, as we sing with the psalmist:

*Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that breathes praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! (Psalm 150)*

Surely Immanuel Lutheran Church has seen a lot in its 125 years, including the entirety of the 20<sup>th</sup> century! Weddings and birthdays and anniversaries and memorial services, the turning of two centuries, the depression, two World Wars, the Civil Rights movement, and the advent of social media, just to name a few. Through it all one thing has remained true, "*the grace of God has been given*", and that grace continues to be poured out, and that grace will see us into the future.

"God with us" - this is the theme of our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and it is what it means to be Immanuel, to know and trust and have faith that indeed, God is with us. Through trial and tribulation, through joy and celebration, God is with us. I give thanks and praise because of the grace that has been given to us in Christ Jesus, thanks and praise for the grace that will see us into the next 125 years, and the grace that will see us home.

What will the future bring? We cannot know, but we do know that God will be with us to accomplish both small and mighty works. So let us go forth into the next 125 years in perfect confidence knowing our Lord goes before us to prepare the way.

*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.  
My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 16:23-4)*

***Pastor John***

Pastor John's e-mail: [jokan001@luthersem.edu](mailto:jokan001@luthersem.edu) Cell phone #360-393-2435

Office hours: M, W, and Thursday mornings





### Scripture Readings

#### **August 7 - 12 Pentecost**

Genesis 15:1-6

Psalms 33:12-22

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Luke 12:32-40

#### **August 14 - 13 Pentecost**

Jeremiah 23:23-29

Psalms 82

Hebrews 11:29-12:2

Luke 12:49-56

#### **August 21 - 14 Pentecost**

Isaiah 58:9b-14

Psalms 103:1-8

Hebrews 12:18-29

Luke 13:10-17

#### **August 28 - 15 Pentecost**

Proverbs 25:6-7

Psalms 112

Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16

Luke 14:1, 7-14

### UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT

#### DATES AT IMMANUEL:

- **August 14**– Church Council meets at 6:00
- **August 20** - Pinochle
- **August 27** - WOI Rummage Sale

### August Birthdays

8/2 Freddy Delgado

8/4 Dennis Workman

8/4 Jeff Larson

8/10 Russ Swanson

8/14 Mike Brewer

8/14 Carolyn Enzler

8/16 Allyann Bargewell

8/23 Cheryl Kortlever

8/23 Jones Pattison

8/25 Jordan Gassman

8/27 Gregg Newton

8/30 Jim Hawley

8/31 Jeanne Chadwick



### August Anniversaries

8/1 Ron & Julie Roman

8/3 Scott & Tone Piper

8/3 Bob & Cindy Klein

8/7 Mark & Sue Ohlswager

8/17 Jan & Jerry Hunter

8/20 Bryan & Margot Noe

8/21 Don & Linda Anderson

8/22 John & Darlene Bayer

8/26 Jeff & Diane Monsen

8/31 Jim & Helen Freeman

8/31 Scott & Tone Piper

### **Thanks for the Socks!**

We recently collected socks to be distributed by the *Salt on the Streets* "team". I was verbally thanked for the donation, and would like to pass that on to everyone who contributed. The socks were all given out the Saturday after they were received by Salt on the Streets, and the people who received them were very grateful. Many thanks to all who contributed! *Karen Brewer*

### **Thank-you from Alice**

Alice and her family would like to thank the Immanuel family for helping celebrate her 90th birthday. Your kind words, hugs, cards, food and flowers are all reflections of God's amazing love! We are filled with gratitude to be surrounded by such a wonderful community. Thank you!



**August 7 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min: Laura Hookham  
Greeter: Muriel & Shelly Ron & Judy Bruland  
Ushers: Ron & Judy Bruland  
Com. Asst': Liza Okan  
Reader: Ron Bruland  
Communion Set-up: Liza Okan  
Flowers on Altar:

**August 14 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min: Sara Murdock  
Greeters: Pam Andrews Wes Murdock  
Ushers: Wes Murdock  
Com. Ass't: Michelle Pattison  
Reader: Michelle Pattison  
Communion set-up: Belia Estrada & Michelle Pattison  
Flowers:

**August 21 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min: Don Anderson  
Greeters: Hunters Mike & Karen Brewer  
Ushers: Mike & Karen Brewer  
Com. Ass't: Linda Anderson  
Reader: Dennis Workman  
Communion Set Up: Valerie & Michelle  
Flowers: Bill & Carol VanderYacht in memory of Josh

**August 28 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**

Ass't Min: Karen Harkness  
Greeters: Freemans Jackie & Alice  
Ushers: Jackie & Alice  
Com. Ass't: Kim Roe  
Reader: Kim Roe  
Communion Set-up: Michelle Pattison  
Flowers:



**If you are unable to serve on your assigned Sunday, please call someone that you can either switch an assigned Sunday with or sub for you.**

A big thank-you to all the helpers; you are greatly appreciated and needed!

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**WE DID IT!**

My heartfelt thanks to everyone who played a part in making the 125th Anniversary celebration weekend a success. The church, the grounds, the weather, the music, the conversations were all beautiful. What a wonderful testament to God's sustaining love and grace of this community of faith for 125 years. With overwhelming gratitude, *Liza Okan*

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

*– Isaiah 41:10*

*Those who walk  
with God always  
reach their  
destination.*

## WOI NEWS

It is time for the Women of Immanuel to refill their treasury. Over the past year they have donated money to Immanuel Lutheran Church, the septic system fund, numerous local charities, and have purchased the supplies needed to make over 350 quilts, school bags, health kits, and baby kits. We need to rebuild our funds so we can continue to do these good works in our community. Several events are up coming.

Two handmade quilts are being raffled and the drawing will be in October at the Fall Festival. One quilt was made by Carol Bennett and another by Linda Anderson. Tickets will go on sale at the 125th celebration for \$2.00 a piece or 12 tickets (1 dozen for \$20.00).

- **August 4<sup>th</sup>** Thursday - Women of Immanuel Board Meeting at 12:00 in the parish hall. Bring along a salad to share. Jan will bring some rolls to go with a salad lunch.
- **August 9<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday-** WOI Bible Study meets at the home of Carol VanderYacht at 7pm.
- **August 23 Tuesday - WOI "Gather Magazine"** Discussion Group meets at the home of Penny McInnis at 7 pm.
- **August 27<sup>th</sup>, Saturday -** WOI Rummage Sale. Bring items to contribute to the church's Parish Hall beginning Wednesday, August 24.
- **A BIG thank you to Bill & Carol VanderYacht** for hosting WOI's "Picnic at the Pond".
- **September 17 Immanuel Retreat** - The Women of Immanuel will host a retreat from 9 to 2 with Pastor Heidi Fish. More information to follow.
- **October 15** - The Women of Immanuel will host their **Fall Festival** - bake sale, silent auction, lunch counter, Holiday House, etc.



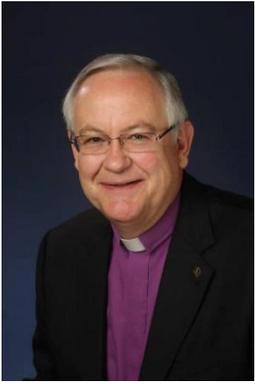
## **FROM INTERFAITH COALITION:**

*Dear Pastor Okan, Nancy, and Members of Immanuel Lutheran:*

Last Friday there were many smiles and a lot of love floating around the Project Homeless Connect (PHC) site at Bellingham High School where 570 guests were served. On site volunteers I have spoken with talk about the intense feeling of connection and "rightness" they got from offering their time to help out. As people of faith, we know that those feelings are because this is what we are called to do for those in need. Thank YOU for being there as well for the men, women, and children who walked away from PHC with shoes, boots, hygiene items, blankets, socks, underwear, flashlights, and camping supplies. Once again, your generous response to the call for donations meant that people already struggling to live without a home will at least have some basic necessities, rather than having to live without those as well. Thank You!

**...And more thanks –**

Children from homeless families have a different attitude about summer break from school: their predictable, supportive routine of going to school, being with friends, being "normal", is now gone. Their summer does not involve camp and hanging out with school friends. "Camping" is not a family vacation – it is an everyday situation for many children who would give anything to have a home and routine. Through your partnership and generous donations to Interfaith Coalition, we are reaching out to children and families in Whatcom County and giving them a chance at being "normal" again. One of the newest families in Interfaith Family Housing is a grandmother raising her six grandchildren. They had been living in her van or on the floor for *two years!* We cannot adequately describe the intense joy on the grandmother's face when we recently dropped by to see how things were going. It felt like if it were translated into electricity it could power all of Whatcom County. **YOU MEAN THAT MUCH TO THEM** - and to many other children and adults. *Thank You* for your congregation's on-going support! Because somewhere out there is a child who is praying for someone, somewhere, who will help his or her family. We are grateful that you are here to help us be there for them.



## God's Gift of Friendship

By the Rev. Kirby Unti,  
Bishop  
From *The Spirit* (August  
2016)

His death is still settling in. I lost my best friend - John Mark Ericksen. We met at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary. John had just returned from serving with the Peace Corp in Niger, West Africa. He had spent his tour teaching the local people how to build sustainable wells. Clean drinking water was life-giving water to the villages John accompanied.

It was service John loved. He loved the people. He loved their way of life. And he loved his horse that provided him both transportation and thrill.

John grew up in a family filled with pastors. His father, his older brother, and several uncles. He was the youngest of five brothers. My hunch is John was his mother's favorite. We would travel back and forth from PLTS together. John lived in Tacoma. I lived in Kenmore. His mother Evelyn would always say to me as we departed, "Now you take good care of John." It was a charge I took to heart. Friends take care of friends.

John was one of those people everyone liked. He was quiet and yet engaging. He was a great listener and had a very natural way of affirming others. His movements were slow, precise and ended with an exclamation. He even ate his meals this way. I would be finished and John would have barely started. He would carefully cut his food, and top it off with a slight flare of his knife before returning it to its proper place.

In many ways we were polar opposites and yet deeply bonded in our friendship. We could go for months without talking or seeing one another and then immediately take up the friendship where we had left off. Our friendship

was seamless. There was never any guilt or shame with John.

It was a very sad day when I learned that John had been diagnosed with the early onset of dementia. It meant he would have to resign his call as pastor and go on long term disability. The decline would be gradual - but irreversible. Slowly, but surely, I was losing my friend. His ability to track the present was challenged, but his memory of the past was often better than my own. We would go out on the boat together and spend the bulk of the time talking about the good old days and the mischief we committed. We would stay up late and laugh into the night.

When I was elected bishop I wanted John to be a part of the service. I asked him to be the crucifer knowing he would need to be accompanied. Our four daughters flanked him on all sides and escorted him to the altar. It brought them great joy. They too loved John. Seeing John "lift high the cross" was the highlight of the installation service for me.

These last few years the rate of the decline had increased. Marita did everything under her power to protect John's dignity and provide for his care. The day before John died, she made it possible for me to talk to him on the phone. I said Johnny, "We are going to take a boat ride." His response was, "Wonderful!"

John was my wonderful friend. He became a well of living water for me. Even in his death he continues to bring me life. A true gift from God. Now God, you take good care of John Mark as we trust him to your care and the promise of the resurrection.