

Immanuel Lutheran Church

February 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
Church Email: Immanuel.everson@gmail.com

Immanuel Lutheran Church
5782 Lawrence Rd.
Everson, WA 98247

Dear People of Immanuel,

“When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove (Jesus) out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff.” (Luke 4:28-29)

This is the response of the local, hometown folks upon hearing Jesus' first sermon. Was it the part about bringing good news to the poor? Release of the captives? Proclamation of the year of the Lord's favor? Can't we and they all get behind such notions?

Maybe it was when he laid claim to the fact that “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” (v. 21) But this merely seems to cause wonder as they said, “Is this not Joseph's son?”

But, however, then, when he speaks of God caring for foreign widows and healing foreign, pagan rulers, Namaan the Syrian! All the while **our** widows went without, **our** lepers were not cleansed! *“When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage.”*

I can't help but consider, their rage, their resentment was caused because Jesus dared declare God's love and providence and care towards those these hometown, local folks considered mortal enemies. Moreover the under-lying implication, that God's love and providence is not predicated upon our lineage, our faith tradition, our awareness or adherence to God's commandments, none of these or anything else is required for God's love and concern. And finally, the truth that we cannot and we do not exhibit some sort of control over God's action in our lives or in our world.

Truth is we simply cannot handle a God who truly loves all the world, because if we are truly to follow such a God, it would require the same from us. We cannot handle the shameful grace with which God loves us and all the world, yet God continues to foolishly and imprudently look upon us, and all the world with favor.

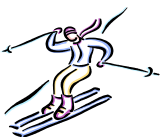
“But (Jesus) passed through the midst of them and went on his way.” (v. 30) Jesus is even gracious in his rebuke of these seething, enraged locals, simply passing through them to go on loving and serving and healing.

Perhaps many of those gathered that day at the brow of the hill finally allowed for Jesus to be so gratuitously gracious, while others held out 'til the bitter end. The question for us is how gracious will we allow Jesus to be in our lives, in our church, in our community, in our world?

Pastor John

Pastor John's e-mail: jokan001@luthersem.edu

Cell phone #360-393-2435





Scripture Readings

February 7 - Transfiguration of Our Lord

Exodus 34:29-35

Psalm 99

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Luke 9:28-43a

February 14 - 1 Lent

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

Romans 10:8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

February 21 - 2 Lent

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Psalm 27

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Luke 13:31-35

February 28 - 3 Lent

Isaiah 55:1-9

Psalm 63:1-8

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Luke 13:1-9

UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:

- **February 6** – Men's breakfast and Bible study, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. in Parish Hall.
- **February 6** – Worship & Music Team meets at 9:30
- **February 10th** – Ash Wednesday with a service at 6:00 p.m.
- **Feb. 14** - "*Love Makes the World Go Around*" – dinner after second service.
- **February 14th** – First Sunday in Lent.
- **February 21st** – Celebration Sunday
- **Wednesdays, February 17th, 24th, March 2, March 9, March 16th** – **Lenten services** at 6:00 p.m. after soup and bread meal at 5:00.

February Birthdays

2/2 Glen Okan

2/4 Matti Toivola

2/6 Margot Noe

2/8 Jan Hunter

2/10 Arlene Engholm

2/13 Bryan Fjeld

2/16 Don Anderson

2/16 Diane Monsen

2/18 Jeff Monsen

2/18 Penny McInnis

2/18 Heidi Fish

2/19 Susie Smith

2/19 Keith Williams

2/21 Bill Simpson

2/21 Belia Estrada

2/24 Don Crepe

2/28 Grace Douglas

2/28 Bob Klein

February Anniversaries

2/9 Len & Rebeccajo Andrews

2/18 Jose and Erika Cruz Estrada

2/26 Glen & Nancy Okan



Therapeutic Yoga at St. John's Lutheran Church

2530 Cornwall Avenue, Bellingham, 5:30pm, Wednesdays, donation of \$5 -\$7.

Each participant is given an individual program depending on each person's goal. Come to the alley door, ring the bell.

For more information: 733-4190

Love in a Time of Fear

Christians and Muslims as Neighbors

Sunday, February 28th at 6:00 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, 5904 Vista Drive, Ferndale

February 7, 2016 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.

Ass't. Min. Laura Hookham
Greeter: Muriel & Shelly Ron & Judy Bruland
Usher Ron & Judy Bruland
Com. Asst' Liza Okan
Reader: Ron Bruland

Flowers:

Communion Set-up: Liza Okan

After Worship Prayer Teams:

1st Service: Jim & Clarice

2nd Service: Kim & Dennis

February 14 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.

Ass't. Min: Sara Murdock
Greeter: Pam Andrews Wes Murdock
Usher: Wes Murdock
Com. Ass't: Asia Roman
Reader: Kim Roe

Flowers: No Flowers during Lent

Communion Set Up: Belia Estrada & Asia Roman

After Worship Prayer Teams:

1st Service: Helen & Dennis

2nd Service: Kim & Joanie

February 21 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.

Ass't. Min: Don Anderson
Greeter: Hunters Mike & Karen Brewer
Ushers: Mike & Karen Brewer
Com. Ass't: Linda Anderson
Reader: Dennis Workman

Communion Set Up:

Valerie Henderson & Linda Anderson

Flowers: No Flowers during Lent

After Worship Prayer Teams:

1st Service: Jim & Nancy;

2nd Service: Linda & Neil

February 28 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.

Ass't Min. Karen Harkness
Greeter: Jim & Helen Freeman Jackie & Alice
Usher: Jackie & Alice
Com. Ass't: Sara Murdock
Reader: Liza Okan

Flowers: No Flowers during Lent

Communion Set-up: Sara Murdock

After Worship Prayer Teams:

1st Service: Jim & Helen

2nd Service: Linda & _____

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.

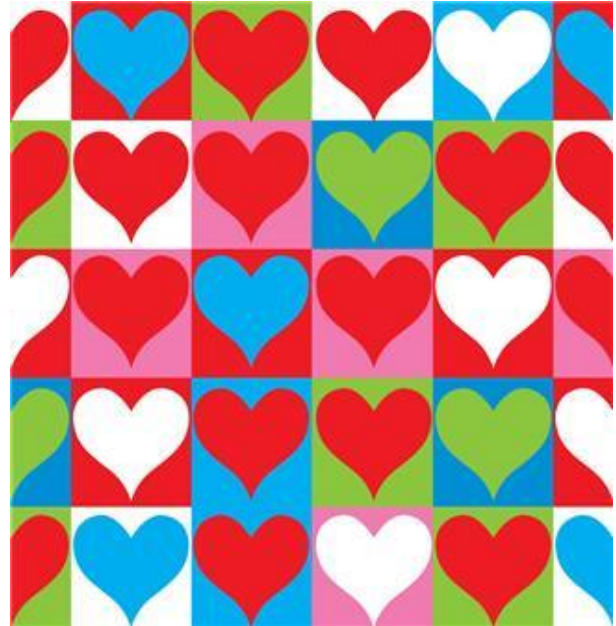
A big thank-you to all the helpers; you are greatly appreciated and needed!

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Office phone: (360) 592-5876

Pastor John's phone: (360) 393-2435



TREASURER'S REPORT

2015 budget: \$144,249.00

Monthly Income needed: \$12,020.75

January offering: \$10,534.62 Other Income: \$992.01

Total January Income: \$11,526.63

Parsonage fund: \$1,786.21

Sunday School Offering: \$262.27

Christmas Offering: \$652.51

To December 31st our income exceeded our expenses by \$14,551.91

To fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances; to seek him, the greatest adventure; to find him, the greatest human achievement."
—Raphael Simon

LENTEN SERVICES

The Lenten season begins on **February 10, Ash Wednesday**, with a service at 6:00 p.m.

Beginning **February 17** we will have Wednesday Lenten services at 6:00 PM following a soup and bread supper at 5:00. Please join us!



Women of Immanuel News

- ❖ Hosts and Hostesses signed up for **Celebration Sunday** for the next six months are:
February - Judy Bruland and Penny McInnis
March - Karen Harkness and Karen Brewer
April - Bill Simpson
May - Carolyn Enzler
June - Jan Hunter
July - Alice Johnson and Sophia Okan
- ❖ The Women of Immanuel **Bible Study** will be held on Tuesday, February 10th, at Carol VanderYacht's home at 7:00 p.m.
- ❖ **Sunday, February 14 - "Love Makes the World Go Around"** – dinner after second service. Bring an ethnic dish (either ethnic to a country or ethnic to a region of the United States or ethnic to your family). Bring along a recipe with your dish and we will publish the recipes for all who are interested. We will be treated to special music from Salvador, the Men's Choir, and Dennis Workman.
- ❖ **Bible Study** will meet at Carol VanderYacht's Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 7:00 p.m.

- ❖ Discussion of "**Gather**" magazine articles on February 23 at Penny McInnis' at 7:00 p.m.
- ❖ **The Daniel Plan** group will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays in the Parish Hall.
- ❖ **QUILTER'S MARK THE DATE!** - March 19 from 9:00 - noon in the Parish Hall for a FABRIC EXCHANGE

Upcoming Interfaith Coalition Events

Hope is on the Way! Save the Date for the Interfaith Hope Auction!

Mark your calendar: Interfaith's 25th Annual Hope Auction happens on **Saturday, March 19th, at 5:30 p.m.** The auction will take place at the newly-named Four Points by Sheraton (formerly Best Western Lakeway Inn, 714 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham).

Whatcom County's friendliest auction fundraiser features fellowship, inspiration, hope and lively bidding on great auction items. Please join us as we continue in our work of transforming struggling lives. You can help in these ways:

- Do you have an auction item to donate? A service you offer, your own artwork, gift certificate, tickets to popular sporting events, vacation home getaway, ...let your imagination soar and think of what you might be able to donate, and get in touch with us!
 - Buy tickets to the auction. Tickets are \$50 each, including dinner.
 - Become a business sponsor or ask your favorite businesses or employers to support Interfaith with a dedicated donation.

We make a difference in the lives of homeless families, men and women. Partner with us by attending Hope Auction and lifting up our brothers and sisters! To donate an auction item and purchase tickets, please contact Interfaith Coalition at 734-3983 or through the website: www.interfaith-coalition.org

Interfaith Choir Festival

Enjoy a concert of spiritual music by attending the Interfaith Coalition Choir Festival on **Sunday, February 21 at 3:30 p.m.** Individual choirs (including our church choir!) perform a song from their faith tradition, then join together in two songs with a combined choir of over 200 voices. The combined choir will sing two selections: *Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace* and *All Lifted Hearts*. *All Lifted Hearts* is a beautiful melody interspersed with spoken lines on the subject of the golden rule from different faiths, making a powerful statement about working together for peace.

Individual singers are invited to participate in the combined choir. Please contact Interfaith Coalition at 734-3983 if you are interested in singing. An offering to benefit Interfaith Coalition programs, will be gratefully accepted.

Bishop's Message

I Pray That They Might Be One

Kirby Unti, NWWA Bishop
The Spirit, February 2016

For he himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. Ephesians 2:14

I was not prepared for what I was about to see. I knew it existed but I had never set eyes on it. Living in the State of Washington, I have crossed into Canada many times but I had never seen the iron wall that cuts through the heart of Nogales, Arizona dividing families who live on the United States side of the wall from those living on the Mexican side.

The people of Nogales for hundreds of years moved freely through their town until an agreement was reached between the United States and Mexico that would draw the border which now divides the city. It is North America's Berlin.

Kim and I watched two women, perhaps sisters, trying to hug one another through the narrow opening in the wall. Alongside the woman on the Mexico side of the border stood another woman

holding her baby. She was trying to show the baby to the woman on the opposing side. It broke my heart. How could this be America?

We gathered around Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as bishops and spouses and she led us in prayer reminding us of who our God is. The God who breaks down the walls that separate us from one another. The God who hears the cry of God's people and comes down to be with us. One of our bishops spoke the words of Ronald Reagan, "Gorbachev, tear down this wall."

Later that day we gathered at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Nogales and heard the stories of those who are trying to seek legal entrance into the United States. The paperwork is so burdensome and the rules so confusing, that it is not unheard of to take up to ten years or longer. And you better have a good immigration attorney because on your own you have little or no hope of navigating a cumbersome system.

I could not help but think about what it was like to try to secure the military benefits my parents were qualified to receive as they neared the end of their lives. They were both World War II Veterans. If it were not for my brother, who is an attorney, we would have given up.

I understand the need to keep drug dealers and criminals out. But surely we can find a more just and human way to welcome those who are seeking work or to be reunited with their families - in the same manner most of our families were welcomed.

The grace moment of the trip happened earlier in the week as we gathered at the historic San Xavier Catholic Church. It would be a first for this congregation. They not only welcomed us as Lutherans - they were willing to allow us to use their altar table to celebrate Holy Communion. We witnessed one wall erected and participated in breaking down another.