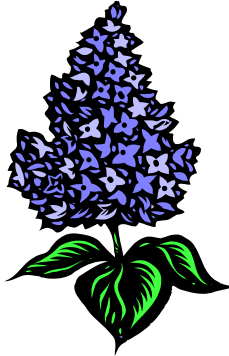


# Immanuel Lutheran Church

## June 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](mailto:Immanuel.everson@gmail.com)

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
5782 Lawrence Rd.  
Everson, WA 98247

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)*

These are the words that end Matthew’s Gospel and in many ways these verses encompass the mission of the church in every age. But what is it that Jesus has commanded us, his followers, to do? Perhaps the beginning and the end would be Jesus’ response to the question posed to him earlier in Matthew,

*“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” (Matthew 22:36)*

<sup>37</sup> [Jesus] said to him, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”<sup>38</sup> This is the greatest and first commandment.<sup>39</sup> And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’<sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (Matthew 22:37-40)*

Jesus tells us that all the law and the prophets point to love of God and love of neighbor. Simple right? If it were only so easy. Before we are even out of the gate we quickly realize we so often fail to love God above all things. Hopefully, this would forever drive us to our knees in repentance, but it doesn’t, for we forever find some way to rationalize, to justify, to convince ourselves we have done this, and then all is lost.

However, all is not lost, because our Good Shepherd has a heart for the lost and is faithful to the faithless. What a freedom does this give us? You mean God’s love and faithfulness is not dependent upon our response? God’s faithfulness to us is not dependent upon our faithfulness to God? Yes, that is it, God’s love and faithfulness and life is ours, no matter what.

It is out of and in this freedom that we live and breath and have our being. It is out of and in this freedom that we can actually chance to love our neighbor as ourself, to truly love and care for them as Christ would.

It is in and out of this freedom we consider the problems of our brothers and sisters experiencing homelessness. It is in and out of this freedom we consider how we are to welcome the other. It is in and out of this freedom that we consider how we are to, “Love our enemies and pray for those who persecute you,” (Matthew 5:44). But even more than merely considering these things, we are called to actually do them, to love our neighbors as ourselves.

*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**

### **June 5 - 3 Pentecost**

1 Kings 17:17-24

Psalm 30

Galatians 1:11-24

Luke 7:11-17

### **June 12 - 4 Pentecost**

2 Samuel 11:26-12:10, 13-15

Psalm 32

Galatians 2:15-21

Luke 7:36-8:3

### **June 19 - 5 Pentecost**

Isaiah 65:1-9

Psalm 22:19-28

Galatians 3:23-29

Luke 8:26-39

### **June 26 - 6 Pentecost**

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21

Psalm 16

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Luke 9:51-62

## **UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:**

- **June 1** – VBS Planning meeting – 5:30
- **June 9** – Strawberry Social, 5:00 – 7:00
- **June 12** – Celebration Sunday
- **June 12** – Church Council meets - 6:00
- **June 20 – June 24<sup>th</sup>** – 9:00 a.m. – Noon  
Vacation Bible School

## **June Birthdays**

6/1 Joseph Fjeld

6/1 Jim Freeman

6/6 Carol VanderYacht

6/6 Debbie Short

6/12 Jerry Hunter

6/13 Jeffrey Delgado

6/16 Harry Smith

6/19 Bob Ramey

6/22 April Ramey

6/24 Nathan Campbell

6/24 Cameron Noe

6/26 James Bailey

6/26 Steve Higbee

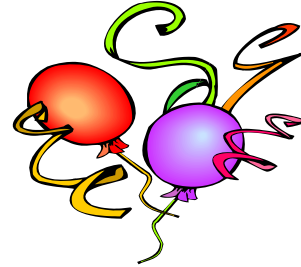
6/26 Len Andrews

6/27 Eleanor Okan

6/28 Jerry Noe

6/28 John Bayer

6/30 Michelle Pattison



## **June Anniversaries**

6/1 Bob & April Ramey

6/4 Joe & Dawn Durand

6/10 Gary & Jeanne Chadwick

6/14 Harry & Linelle Williams

6/16 Ike & Gail Halverson

6/30 Russ & Kara Swanson



## **HELPING HANDS**

Thank you to the volunteers that worked with "Helping Hands" this year: Jan Hunter, Shelley Culver, Linda Anderson, and Nancy Workman. We had our last get-together this past week. We had six children most Wednesday afternoons and four adults. We will start up again the Wednesday after Labor Day.

## INTERFAITH COALITION NEWS

“Do small things with great love...” It really DOES make a difference! Interfaith Coalition has many small ways you can help those in need: knit hats and scarves for Project Warm Up; volunteer once a month to help serve and transport food for the CAST program, or collect items that CAST distributes year round (gloves, hats, small size hygiene items, socks, tarps.) Call Interfaith at **734-3983** for more info. In addition, Interfaith collects items for Project Homeless Connect, a one-day event in Bellingham on July 22 that brings immediate access to services for the homeless.

Giveaway items needed: travel-sized hygiene items, new socks and underwear (adults and children), blankets, sleeping bags, tarps, tents, backpacks, shoes (tennis shoes and boots only), baby wipes, flashlights and batteries. (NO CLOTHING PLEASE!) Donated items can be brought to the Interfaith office at St. James before July 15 – **please call first**. To volunteer at the event, contact the Whatcom Volunteer Center at 734-3055.

**CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together)**, a street food outreach program, serves over 750 meals each month, 4 evenings a week, and is totally volunteer-run and donation-supported.

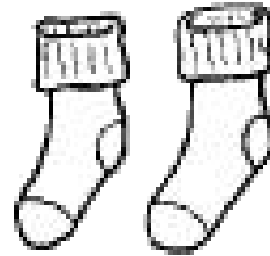
- Consider “adopting” a food item to regularly add to our supplies: from peanut butter to hot cocoa packets, helping provide food items helps greatly. (*CAST has a very specific list of food items, so please contact us before collecting.*) All year long CAST also needs your donations of new, unopened: socks, travel-sized lotions, conditioner, shampoo, toothpaste, razors, and toothbrushes.
- CAST needs volunteers. A once-or-twice-a month 2 hour commitment doesn't put a huge dent in your free time, but has huge results: many people won't go to a cold bed under a bridge also hungry those nights.
- Ask congregation members if they would consider sacrificing a cup of coffee once a week and donating the price. One small latte would pay for two meals. A small sacrifice, but a meaningful way to help someone.

## A BIRTHDAY PARTY INVITATION

Please join our family as we celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of Marion Erickson Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 – 4:00 PM at Camano Lutheran Church Parish Hall: 850 Heichel Road, Camano Island, WA. All are welcome; no gifts, please.

## Socks for Salt on the Street

A box is in the Parish Hall for men's socks. All socks will be donated to Salt and the Street which distributes clean, dry socks to homeless men here locally.



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL June 20 - 24

Immanuel Lutheran will be hosting a vacation Bible school June 20<sup>th</sup> – June 24<sup>th</sup>. It will begin each day at 9:00 a.m. and finish at noon. We will be having a planning meeting on Wednesday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 PM at the church. VBS is going to be a LOT of fun! We will need plenty of volunteers, so if you have the time, please talk to Pastor John or Jan Hunter about how you can help.

## PRAYER HEALS

If you have a desire/need for prayer we ALWAYS offer the opportunity for you to meet after worship with a prayer team who will pray with you. The prayer team will be available at the front of the sanctuary. If you would like to meet privately with the prayer team, just ask them and they will find a place to pray with you.

**June 5, 2015 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**  
 Ass't. Min. Muriel & Shelly Laura Hookham  
 Greeter: Ron & Judy Bruland  
 Usher Ron & Judy Bruland  
 Reader: Ron Bruland  
 Com. Asst' Liza Okan  
 Communion Set-up: Liza Okan  
 Flowers:  
 After Worship Prayer Teams:  
 1<sup>st</sup> Service: Helen & Lois  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Service: Michelle & Dennis

**June 12 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**  
 Ass't. Min: Sara Murdock  
 Greeter: Pam Andrews Wes Murdock  
 Usher: Wes Murdock  
 Com. Ass't: Kim Roe  
 Reader: Kim Roe  
 Communion Set Up: Belia Estrada & Michelle Pattison  
 Flowers: Ike & Gail Halverson  
 After Worship Prayer Teams:  
 1<sup>st</sup> Service: Jim & Nancy  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Service: Kim & Dennis

**June 19 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 & Linda  
 Flowers:  
 After Worship Prayer Teams:  
 1<sup>st</sup> Service: Carol & Nancy  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Service: Joanie & Michelle

**June 26 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**  
 Ass't Min. Karen Harkness  
 Greeter: Freemans Jackie & Alice  
 Usher: Jackie & Alice  
 Com. Ass't: Sara Murdock  
 Reader: Liza Okan  
 Communion Set-up: Sara Murdock  
 Flowers: Okan family for Eleanor's 7<sup>th</sup> b'day  
 After Worship Prayer Teams:  
 1<sup>st</sup> Service: Neil & Lois  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Service: Linda & Joanie

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!

Email address for Kim: [Immanuel.everson@gmail.com](mailto:Immanuel.everson@gmail.com)  
 Email address for Pastor John: [jokan001@luthersem.edu](mailto:jokan001@luthersem.edu)  
 Office phone: (360) 592-5876  
 Pastor John's phone: (360) 393-2435



*“Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each.”*

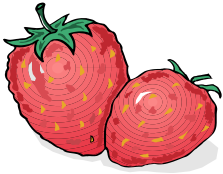
*-Henry David Thoreau*

**THANK-YOU!**

Thank you to each choir member (Men's choir, Bells, and choir) for sharing your gift of music with our congregation. Your faithfulness of attending weekly practices and singing (and ringing) each month is appreciated by Immanuel (God and the people of our church). We will be practicing again in July in preparation for our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary and then we will begin again in September. If you enjoy music and laughter, you are welcome to join us. Is God calling you?



## WOMEN of Immanuel NEWS



**The Strawberry Social is June 9.** Please help us by signing up on the duty rosters in the Parish Hall. The proceeds after expenses will go to Foothills Foodbank, Summer Child Nutrition Program through Mt. Baker School District, YWCA - Women to Work Program, and Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services.

**WOI Bible Study** to meet at the home of **Carol VanderYacht** on Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

**WOI Board Meeting** set for Thursday, **June 2nd**, after quilting.

**Gather Discussion Group** will meet at the home of Penny McGinnis on Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, at 7 pm.

### Bishop's Message

#### ***When Strangers Become Friends***

*Kirby Unti, Bishop*

*Northwest Washington Synod*

*Article from The Spirit, June 2016*

There is a golden thread that has been woven through my life. It is the thread that moves me from being a person who is usually frightened and uncomfortable to a person who is blessed with new friendship.

I can tell you countless stories beginning with my childhood family. My father worked for the Easter Seal Society which is a non-profit advocating and providing services for people with incredible physical and mental challenges. It was my dad's habit to invite the people he was working with to our home. Imagine how my eyes lit up as a little boy when Harold Wilke, a man with no arms, was able to sit at the dinner table and use his feet as effectively as I use my hands. This once strange man became a highly respected family friend.

I remember in High School participating in a week long exchange program with Cleveland High School. We are talking about my nearly all white high school visiting a very integrated city school. It began with a parent orientation where the anxiety was off the charts. It took the parents from Cleveland to correct the many misperceptions and fears that the suburban parents held. I was so fortunate to have been selected as one the students to participate in the exchange. Yes, I was afraid and it would take weeks for the fear to turn into another great blessing in my life. Not to mention I developed a crush on a Chinese girl whose parents would not allow me to talk to her on the phone. Moving to my internship year in Bellevue, I discovered the opportunity to take a group of High School kids to a group home in Renton where the residents were children who were mostly bed confined and with no speech skills. This was not only challenging for me but a brand new experience for most of the kids in the youth group. When I run into these kids who are now adults they often comment about how significant this ministry was.

Fear has often been a show stopper in my life and every time I give into it my life becomes constrained and limited. This is not to say fear doesn't have its rightful place. One of our daughters had a scary encounter with a large dog when she was quite little and developed a real fear of dogs. When we discussed this with our pediatrician she said, "She should be afraid of dogs. It will help protect her until she learns the necessary judgment skills to know when it's ok to engage a dog." It is a lesson I have not forgotten.

I am still trying to learn to honor the rightful place for fear in my life without letting it trump the golden thread of blessing that comes when I learn to welcome the stranger.

Friends, this has been one of the great gifts of serving the office of bishop. It continues to afford me the opportunity to be in the presence of people who first appear to me as strangers, often creating discomfort but almost always ending up as being gifts in my life.

It should come as no surprise that one of the most repeated admonishments in scripture is, "Do not be afraid!" Fear that surprises us with blessing is one more expression of God's grace.