

# Immanuel Lutheran Church

## June 2018

### 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

**Interim Pastor Arden Barden**

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## REVIEWING OUR INTERIM TIME TOGETHER

From Pastor Barden

As I come to the close of these several months of our life and ministry together, I find myself thinking about what we've been working on. I regard my interim ministry as "intentional," which means that what I have wanted to bring is intentional. The final evaluation of what difference it all makes usually isn't known until two or three or four years going forward. Even so, as I think about my intended involvement, I summarize it this way: My intention has been to be affirming, visionary, inspirational, and encouraging.

Affirming You are a "faithful people of faith." Your roots are deep in members who loved their God and loved one another. This shines forth the way you care about each other and in your worship, music, and prayer ministries. You have come forth with resources to manage financial challenges and you are willing to embrace the future with hope and confidence. In your faith, you have welcomed me as your pastor into your concerns, both in your congregation and in your homes. You also have received God's Word through my preaching and teaching, responding with a spiritual listening, growing, and applying of what you hear.

The one distracting function is the concern common in many congregations" the tendency to view pastoral leadership and one another with a passive reactivity based in perspectives of agree/disagree, like/dislike, approve/disapprove ways of holding discussions and making decisions. This lends itself enhanced opinion leading to the forming of subgroups and the potential for conflict. It also tends to rely on what we have known as individuals and what we have done as a congregation because ideas we agree with, likes we choose, or actions we approve of, are things we are comfortable with and have grown to prefer. All of this tends to hold us from opening into new possibilities, developing different approaches, and unifying around future ministries.

To approach this concern, we have looked at a basic model of communication and some guidelines for communicating and working with one another. Based on the confidence of our faith and faithfulness, we have seen that as we embrace trusting, valuing, and appreciating one another, we discover that our God-given giftedness is given greater place in our life and ministry together, and we studied *LifeKeys* as the key to our life together through understanding ourselves and one another--we learned that we are richer for our unique and different styles, talents, and personalities, and that it is in fact God's design for calling us to be God's Gospel-people working together--as we read in I Corinthians 12.

As your interim pastor, I have viewed this as a most important aspect of our moving into the Call Process. Because we need to select someone who will bring spiritual creativity and enthusiasm, it is important that we communicate and make decisions in a way that will open into God's future for us. In our faith and faithfulness, we see that we have a wide-open field for ministries that will share God's Word through our witness and service. Embracing our identity as God's Easter People--God's Mission People is the very foundation of our worship and learning--it is also the very foundation of our having been "created (and redeemed) in Christ Jesus for good works--as we read in Ephesians 2.

Visionary To this end, I have offered a view of our role in this place and time in God's Good World: that we are at "The Cross-Roads" in both our geographical and cultural surrounds. We have envisioned that we are not "out in the middle of nowhere," but rather we are "in the middle of somewhere" as God's Kingdom People. "No-where" needs to be "now-here"--and as we divide the letters of this word differently, our vision of where we need to go and who we need to be calls us into a spiritual timeliness in the Biblical and Sacramental sense of "the right time" and "the right place" for us to be God's living presence here in this part of God's beautiful Nooksack Valley and the scenic Mount Baker.

To move toward this vision, we have experimented with some different ministries even as we have held dear and strengthened some of what we do. In my interim-pastor hope, this I trust has given us some spiritual confidence as we move forward into the Calling of our new pastor. My hope is that a new pastor will come to a readiness to explore new ways of caring and ministering in this time and this place because we see it as God's calling of us as Immanuel Lutheran Church. We will honor the saints both those now in the "great cloud of witnesses" and those among our elder faithful with us, as we see in their decades of life and ministry the very basis for our next decade of our life and ministry as a congregation.

Knowing more about ourselves through our *LifeKeys* study and reflection I also in my interim-pastor hope have offered a visionary sense that God not only has provided but will continue to provide all the resources necessary for us to do the Gospel work we will be called to do. "Immanuel"--God with us--is truly our identity and our strength for our days ahead. Our stewardship of our persons, our finances, and our setting will individually and collectively lift us toward God's increase, both in how we are with ourselves and how we see the potential of God's bringing to us new and gifted partners to be a part of this unfolding future at "The Cross-Roads" and in the terrains of life around us--as we have discovered anew in Jesus' parable of "the Sower who went out to sow."

**Spiritual** Two characterizations have guided my functioning as a pastor over the years. One is Jesus' *Living Word* model of ministry as "preaching, teaching, and healing." The other is Jesus' *Living Word* model in the Lord's Table as "Presence"--*This is My Body* becomes *You are My Body*--we are truly "the Body of Christ." Thus, my hope as your interim pastor has been that my being here has been inspiring--literally as the word says, *in-spiriting*. I believed God called me here for a reason--to pray in and to pry open our hearts and lives for God to breathe in and breathe out God's Holy and Life-giving Spirit.

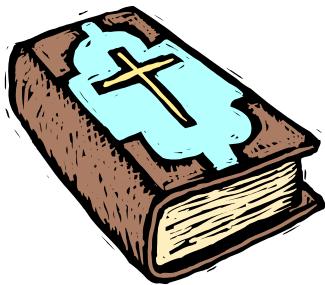
This is what we confess in the Third Article of the Creed as to how God works and as to who we are. We are "the Ones Called Out"--the *ecclasia* as God's ecclesiastical body, the Church. So I have focused on bible-based preaching and teaching, trusting in my own faith, that God will use the preached word from the written word as the Living Word, to thrive and to grow among us. It is not enough for me that my sermons are heard as "good sermons," but that God does something through them--yes, Sunday by Sunday, but also collectively over the months, so that through us as the *gathered* Body of Christ being made ready to be the *scattered* Body of Christ, and thus we go forth "to love and serve the Lord" where we live, work and play, but also in the larger spiritual sense the Light of Christ shines from this Cross-Roads center of faith.

I have used examples from my own life of faith and years of ministry. It has given me somewhat the reputation that I like to talk about myself, but really it is sharing examples of how I have believed and known God to be at work. Being forgiven, loved and called-out are real "life-giving" spiritual experiences for me, and I have seen how they live in and through our Partnership in the Gospel in many contexts in God's Good World. My interim-pastor hope is that they find human touch-points in your own lives as individuals and in your life and ministry together as a congregation. I trust God that "my presence" here for about 10 months has been an inspiration to "your presence" here in this time and this place for the continued work of witnessing and serving as you go forward together. I hope as well that it has served to open trust and value and appreciation for a new pastor's coming to fill Immanuel's Pastoral Office.

**Encouraging** If we are to go forward with courage, we need to be encouraged. St. Paul talks often in encouraging words to those who have come to believe. How they treated one another and how they loved one another are the beginning of their witness and service in the Gospel. Even as I have strived to have us taking ourselves and one another honestly and seriously, I have intended to do so in ways that encourage us toward a continuous growing as God's people. "We are adults," you have heard me say often, "we can do this." We have the faith. We have the calling. We have the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*--to do so.

The biblical word for this is growing in our "maturity in Christ." We are encouraged to have the mind of Christ, to share the love of Christ, to forgive as we are forgiven, and to go with the grace we have received. So, I have in many a conversation, encouraged us strive for those positive, faith-based practical, everyday kind of real manners that need to be "practiced." Practice does make "perfect," but in this case the perfection finds its beginning and its end in Christ and Christ's perfection.

**Conclusion** (...finally, someone might say) In all, this is to say, *Become more of who you already are* as God's Immanuel. It is to say, let's always be about "getting with" God-with-us. It has truly been my pleasure--my joy--to serve you during these months. As I have been blessed with spiritual blessings, I pray that you too have been and will continue to be blessed. Interim pastors are not about the interim really, but about the future. It has been my intention in this time of your transition from past ministry to future ministry, to prepare you for your future. May the same Lord thus continue to bless and be with you in every way. Yours in Christ - *Pastor Barden*



## Scripture Readings

### **June 3 - 2 Pentecost**

Deuteronomy 5:12-15  
Psalm 81:1-10  
2 Corinthians 4:5-12  
Mark 2:23-3:6

### **June 10 - 3 Pentecost**

Genesis 3:8-15  
Psalm 130  
2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1  
Mark 3:20-35

### **June 17 - 4 Pentecost**

Ezekiel 17:22-24  
Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15  
2 Corinthians 5:6-17  
Mark 4:26-34

### **June 24 - John the Baptist**

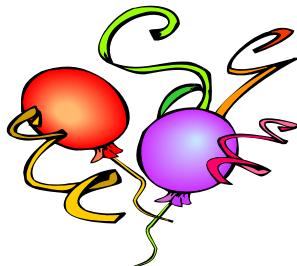
Malachi 3:1-4  
Psalm 141  
Acts 13:13-26  
Luke 1:57-80

## UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:

- **June 9** – Bike Group Rides
- **June 10** – Church Council meets - 12:00
- **June 14** – Strawberry Social 5:00-7:00
- **June 24** – Pastor Barden's final day.  
ONE Service at **9:30**, with a brunch at 11:00.

## 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  
6/24 Nathan Campbell  
6/26 James Bailey  
6/26 Steve Higbee  
6/26 Len Andrews  
6/28 Jerry Noe  
6/28 John Bayer  
6/30 Michelle Pattison



## June Anniversaries

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

## Call Committee Update:

The call committee is meeting on June 7th with Shelley Wee, the Synod representative. She will give us candidate names and go over the interview process at that time.

## **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.



## WOMEN of Immanuel NEWS



- **June 14 is the Strawberry Social**  
(And Spaghetti Dinner) 5-7 p.m.  
Please help us by signing up on the duty rosters in the Parish Hall.
- Bible Study will be at Carol VanderYacht's on June 12th at 7pm.
- Quilters put down your needles, your scissors and your sewing machines! We are taking a summer vacation. The last day of quilting will be on June 7th, quilting will start again in September. Thanks for all your hard work!
- Gather article study will be June 26 - time and place yet to be determined.

### **THANK-YOU!**

Thank you to everyone who participated in our music ministry this year. You have been called and have been faithful to your calling.

#### **Bell Choir Directors –**

Pat Hawley and Nathan Campbell

#### **Men's Group Director - Dennis Workman**

#### **Choir Director - Ben Workman Smith**

Pianist – Nancy Workman



### **June 3, 2015 10:00 a.m.**

Ass't. Min. Laura Hookham  
Greeter: Ron & Judy Bruland  
Ushers: Ron & Judy Bruland  
Reader: Ron Bruland  
Com. Ass't: Linda Anderson  
Communion Set-up: Linda Anderson  
Flowers: VanderYacht's

### **June 10 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min:	Sara Murdock
Greeter: Pam Andrews	Kathee Toivola
Usher:	Kathee Toivola
Com. Ass't:	Karen Harkness
Reader:	Kim Roe
Communion Set Up: Belia/Karen	
Flowers: Salvador Estrada	

### **June 17 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:	

### **June 24 ONE SERVICE 9:30**

Ass't Min. Karen Harkness  
Greeter: Freemans/Wagners  
Usher: Wagners  
Com. Ass't: Kathee Toivola  
Reader: Dawn Durand  
Communion Set-up: Belia/Kathee  
Flowers:

**PLEASE NOTE! JUNE 24 IS PASTOR BARDEN'S LAST DAY. SERVICE IS AT 9:30, FOLLOWED BY A BRUNCH AT 11:00**

**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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## 40,000 of My Closest Friends

Bishop Kirby Unti  
NW Washington Synod /  
ELCA

I am just coming off a wonderful pre-youth gathering event intended to prepare the

276 young people from the Northwest Washington Synod who will be traveling this summer to Houston, Texas for this ELCA's national youth gathering.

When I meet with the young people of our Synod I am both terrified and inspired. I am terrified because I am so disconnected from the world that they inhabit – apps, language, movies, music, etc. I worry whether I can relate to these remarkable young people. Do I have something of meaning that I can bring to the table?

I am inspired because I am so very impressed by the young people who are formed by this church. They have hearts that care. They exhibit behavior that is fun to be around. Repeatedly my experience has been how respectfully they treat me and others. I love their global awareness and how at-home they seem to be in a world that, at times for me, is overwhelming.

One of the things that our young people have shown me is how they resonate to authenticity and honesty. They will put up with an old goat like me if I strive to live within my own skin and answer their questions honestly.

We had a “Stump the Bishop” session at this recent prep event. They asked fun questions - and they asked hard questions. Where was God when the holocaust took place? How can there be different interpretations of the Bible? Who was my first crush? Did I like being a parish pastor more than being a bishop? Which of my daughters do I love the most?”

They wanted honest answers - and I did my best.

The ELCA Youth Gathering will make a real impact on the city of Houston. Unleashing 40,000 students equals a lot of worker bees - and I saw how much good can be done when we were last in Detroit.

The event also has the potential to have a major impact on our young people - helping them to deepen their understanding of their baptism and their vocational call. We will worship together, pray together, play together, and serve together.

One day of the Gathering is set aside as a Synod

Day. During that time, I will again have the joy of spending time with our synod youth – and sharing my personal faith journey with them. It is indeed a privilege to have this opportunity.

Research shows that young people who have this kind of religious scaffolding, experience less at-risk behavior and are three to four times more likely to be involved in their community in the following ways:

- Work on community projects
- Volunteer associations
- Vote in local elections
- Attend Public Meetings
- Donate time and money

So, June 27-July 1, think of me and 40,000 of my closest friends, as we will experience what it means to be the church together for the sake of the world.



*“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*