

Immanuel News



January 2020

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Follow Immanuel Lutheran Church on Facebook: [@ILCWausau](https://www.facebook.com/ILCWausau)

Our Mission: Immanuel Lutheran Church is a fellowship of believers committed to live and share God's love by serving our community and the world.

Our Vision: We gather as believers who seek to grow in faith through worship, education and welcoming fellowship. We seek to share God's love with the community through word and deed. We extend Christ's love in service to our community and our world.

From the Pastor's Desk

"Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Matthew 16:13)

Jesus' life story has influenced the course of human history. His life directly or indirectly affected the lives of Christians and even non-Christians.

Who is Jesus Christ? This question has invited clergy, scholars, laypeople and non-Christians to reflect on the identity of Jesus. For example, Jews do not believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. Other scholars, such as Thomas L. Brodie, an Irish Dominican priest and theologian, question the historicity of Jesus. Brodie believes that Jesus never existed as an historical person and he did not establish Christianity. As a result, the Dominican order banned him from writing

and lecturing. There are many more scholars of the New Testament who deny the existence of Jesus our Lord.

Last week I completed reading a book by Iranian-American Muslim writer and scholar Reza Aslan entitled *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth*. Aslan discusses the historical account of the life of Jesus Christ. He believes that Jesus existed, and he was one of many failed Messiahs. He denies the virgin birth and the resurrection. Jesus was not divine, but was “a political, rebellious and eschatological leader whose proclamation of the coming kingdom of God was a call for regime change, for ending Roman hegemony over Judea and ending a corrupt and oppressive aristocratic priesthood.” (Aslan, Reza. "Books". Retrieved July 29, 2013.)

This book received national attention in the US following a Fox News interview in 2013. My critique of Aslan relies on him building his argument on specific texts, like Josephus, and taking them at face value. He ignores the fact that Josephus was biased toward the Jews and implemented the Romans' agenda in writing the history of the Jews.

Furthermore, Aslan lacks expertise in the subject. He does not have advanced degrees in the New Testament or on the history of Christianity, but he carries an advanced degree in the sociology of religion. I firmly believe that his book is not trustworthy as an historical account. It should not be taken seriously.

Let us go back to our question. Who is Jesus? Why are many people, even Christians, doubting his identity as the Messiah, Savior and God? Why do so many people have a firm intention to diminish Jesus? The reasons are many. I will focus on a few of them.

Firstly, Jesus is the number one enemy of Satan. Satan works hard to trick us into believing that Jesus is not our Savior, and that he never

existed. Satan works in the church and seminaries to make us doubt our faith. Remember, my friends, that Jesus has already defeated Satan for us (Colossians 2:15).

Secondly, the church committed a sin against Jesus Christ and his followers. Historically speaking, the inquisitions, religious wars and child and women abuse have impacted negatively on many Christians. Many Christians are leaving the church because they no longer trust the church. As a result, many churches are closing every year. The church needs to repent and seek reconciliation with God and her members. We need to keep in mind that if the church fails us, Christ will never fail us.

Thirdly, the Internet contributes to declining church attendance. Christians get help anywhere they want on the Internet. No need to go to church to find answers to our questions. It is easy to stay at home and watch services on the Internet or TV. Every day thousands of people search for spirituality online but not in the church. Now, the internet becomes the key to the secularization of the church and society. Many Christians trust the Internet much more than their church. We cannot take the information on the Internet at face value. The Internet cannot replace our Bible or the church.

Finally, as people, we like to share stories with one another. But when it comes to sharing our story with Jesus Christ, we prefer to be silent. I need to hear your story with Jesus Christ because your story strengthens my faith. Not sharing our faith story is like putting the light under a bushel instead of on a candlestick (Matthew 5:5: Pastor is paraphrasing). Your spiritual experience with God is not meant to be a personal matter. God wants you to share your faith story with others. Many people are hungry and thirsty to know about Jesus Christ. So, share your faith in words and deeds.

As we are welcoming a new year. I invite you to reflect on the same question: who is Jesus? Your answer will have an impact not only on your life, but also on the life of your family, community and church. It is not an easy question and the answer will not be easy, too.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras, Ph.D

Church Schedule

**Worship Service at 9:00 am each Sunday
and an additional service at 11:am on the 1st Sunday of each month.**

***Pastor Niveen** is in her church office Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, from 9am-3pm. She visits Homebound Parishioners on Wednesday. Friday is Sermon Day. Saturday is the Pastor's Sabbath. Please email Pastor Niveen or call the church office to set up a time for a meeting.

***Noisy Offering** - Save all your change for the first Sunday of each month. Social Concerns uses the money to help feed the needy in our area.

***Holy Communion** is celebrated the first and third Sunday of each month. Please remember to sign the Friendship/Attendance sheet that is in each pew when you are taking communion. This information is entered into the office computer.

*TV Worship Services : Charter Cable Channel 980 5:45 pm Tuesday & 9:15 am Thursday or online:
Wausau Area Access Media: waam.viebit.com (Left side, scroll to Immanuel Lutheran)*

Our Sister Church is the Lobatla Parish. The address is: c/o Moruti (Pastor) Rev. G.M. Nkale, P.O. Box 160, Motswedi 2870, Republic of South Africa. Pastor Nkale's email address is nkalesto@gmail.com

Immanuel Fellowship Opportunities

Fellowship not only makes the journey enjoyable; it also helps keep us healthy.

Men's Discussion Group - Al Solomonson. The Men's Discussion Group meets on Thursday mornings at 7:30 A.M. in the Koinonia. The group watches a DVD and discusses a series of study titled "Thinking about Religion and Violence" by Professor Jason C. Bivins.

Dorcas Circle - Claudette Harring. Meets at 9am on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

All Women of Immanuel - Vonnie Solomonson. You are always welcome to join our group.

Sarah Circle - Mary McDonell & Vonnie Solomonson. Meets at 1pm on the fourth Thursday of the month.

Are you a quilter or would you like to learn? Join the ILC quilters each Thursday at 9:00am. They meet on the 2nd floor in the education wing. If you have questions, contact Kathy Knox. Stay tuned for Winter meeting information.

Ring for Christ. We would love to have new members in the Bell Choir. Come play bells to praise the Lord! Bell Choir Practice is 5:30 pm every Tuesday. You may hear us play the last Sunday each month through May 19, 2020. If you have any questions, contact Joanne Diestelhorst at 715-573-7379.

Choir

of the soul.

Judy Kort is our choir director. Please come sing with us. All are welcome! We sing, we laugh, we praise the Lord and enjoy each other's fellowship! **Music is an outburst**



Thank you, Dan, Holly and Jerry for fixing the ceiling in the Narthex area.

Thank you, Altar Guild for decorating the church and making it so festive.

Thank you, Judy Kort for playing music during the Christmas season. Thank you, Joanne Diestelhorst for leading and playing the bell choir.

Thank you, Joanne Diestelhorst and Judy Nickolai for directing and producing the children's program. It was so special.

Thank you, Bob Henning for repairing the frames in the hallway and leading worship service on 12/29/19.

Mark Your Calendars!

Tuesday, January 7, 2020: Council Meeting at 6pm. There will not be an Executive Council Meeting.

Sunday, January 12, 2020: Altar Guild members are encouraged to stay after the service on 1/12/20 to put away the Christmas decorations. The congregation is invited to assist.

Thursday, January 16, 2020: **All reports** for the Annual Meeting need to be emailed or dropped off in the office by Thursday, January 16, 2020 to allow time to put the reports together for distribution. The Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 26, 2020.**

Thursday, January 16, 2020: Men's Group will resume meetings.

Sunday, January 19, 2020. Altar Guild Meeting after the service in the fellowship hall.

Sunday, January 26, 2020



Immanuel Lutheran Church Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting will be January 26th immediately following the 9am worship service. Please plan on attending this important meeting.



COMMUNITY DINNER

ILC Outreach in the Wausau Area. ILC Members prepare meals and serve the meals at First Presbyterian Church. Our members help the guests have a warm and friendly experience. ILC does this outreach work four times a year. Would you like to help out? Here are the dates for 2020: April 26, 2020, June 28, 2020, August 23, 2020 and October 25, 2020.

Olive Oil is Here! A new shipment of Canaan Fair Trade olive oil has arrived. The 500 ml bottles are available in the church office for \$15.00. The purchase of this excellent olive oil supports the Palestinian farmers who are part of the cooperative. In addition to using it for your own purposes, it also makes a wonderful gift to give someone!

Birthdays

The following individuals are celebrating their birthday this month.

*Happy
Birthday!*

January 2019

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|-----------------------|------|
| Dan Dellenbach | 1/3 | Connie Lewitzke | 1/12 |
| Jennifer Schafer | 1/4 | Linda Hulstrom | 1/15 |
| Sarah Doede | 1/6 | Jamie Rice-Heckendorf | 1/18 |
| Susan Schwede | 1/6 | Scott Schafer | 1/25 |
| Michael Steltenpohl | 1/8 | Vern Diestelhorst | 1/26 |
| Harlan Grinde | 1/9 | Corey Busche | 1/26 |
| Elaine Grinde | 1/10 | Marge Warner | 1/22 |

*Happy
Anniversary*

Anniversary Wishes to these Special Couples

The following couples are celebrating their Wedding Anniversary

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|----------|
| 1/1 | Jerry & Judy Nickolai | 37 Years |
| 1/7 | Bruce & Kathy Knox | 44 Years |
| 1/20 | Jim & Pat Stolen | 52 Years |
| 1/24 | Bob & Sue Doede | 44 Years |

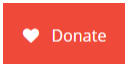
† Joan Lind passed away into her heavenly father's arms on Tuesday, December 24, 2019. The memorial service will be at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, January 17, 2020 at Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Home, 1302 Sixth St., Wausau. Rev. Niveen Sarras will officiate. Burial will be at the Pine Grove Cemetery, Wausau. Visitation will be on Friday from 10:00 a.m. up until the time of service at the funeral home.

Caring Corner

Psalm 71:9 "Do not cast me off in the time of old"

☎ Here are our church friends who are not able to come to church as often as they would like. They would love to hear from you or receive cards in the mail. Please call the church office if someone should be added to list. 📞

| Facility | | Home |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Bell Tower Residence 1500 O'Day St Merrill, WI 54452 ▶ Barb Peterson, Rm 313 ▶ Carol Hettinga, Rm 307</p> <p>Riverview Terrace 540 E. Thomas St. Wausau, WI 54401 ▶ Joyce Lohrey, #207</p> <p>Colonial Manor 1010 E. Wausau Ave Wausau, WI 54403 ▶ Norm Winterhoff</p> | <p>Primrose Retirement Community 2100 Townline Rd Wausau, WI 54403 ▶ Thelma Bursik, Apt #101 ▶ Charlotte Traeger, Apt #215 ▶ Judy Blanchfield, Apt #132 ▶ Faye Schwarm, Apt #133</p> <p>Heritage House of Portage 2685 Airport Road Portage, WI 53901 ▶ Esther Osterby, #43</p> | <p>Carolyn Viergutz N114 W17117 Cove Ct Germantown, WI 53022</p> <p>Pat Stricker 1403 Stark Street Wausau, WI 54403</p> <p>Jeanette Petterson 605 Eagle Nest Blvd. Apt. 208 Rothschild, WI 54474</p> <p>Dale & Ann Kurth 2806 Polzer Drive Wausau, WI 54401</p> |



Online Giving now available! Immanuel Lutheran Church has arranged with Vanco Services to process online donations. GivePlus is the easy and secure way for our congregation to give how and when you would like to. To access this new option, visit our website at: <http://www.immanuelausau.org/online-giving>. Click on the Donate Button. You may also download the GivePlus Mobile App. Thank you for your generous support!

DID YOU KNOW?

Immanuel Lutheran and First English Lutheran were close neighbors at one time. Immanuel was located at First Street and Franklin (the site of the present day Eye Clinic of Wisconsin) and First English was located a block or two south on First Street (now part of a parking lot). These close neighbors got along well and did not hesitate to share programs. Their youth groups often did things together, for example. In 1944 Pastor Achterberg of First English announced his retirement. It was proposed that the two congregations merge since they were so close together and got along so well. The church councils of both congregations approved the merger. Pastor Quello of Immanuel was to be the pastor of this merged church. A name was even selected -- Central Lutheran of Wausau. It was assumed that a new church building would be built after the war. But the president of the American Lutheran Church synod, of which First English was a part, nixed the proposal, and the proposed merger collapsed. So the two congregations went their separate ways. Immanuel built a new building in 1949 at its present site and First English moved to a new colonial style building on Third Avenue a few years later. They became part of the same church body in the merger of 1960. --- Al Solomonson

News & Events Outside of ILC

- **Sunday, January 26, 2020, 3pm.** The Wisconsin River Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present a Members' Recital—Featuring the Eight Little Preludes and Fugues attributed to J. S. Bach. The concert, entitled A Baroque Afternoon, will be held at St. Peter Lutheran Church—Wausau Campus (formerly Salem Lutheran Church) 2822 N 6th St, Wausau.
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FREE!!! 2019 Income Tax Preparation for low-to-moderate income taxpayers; Emphasis on age 60+. Call (715) 298-5734 from 1/9/20-4/2/20. The complete schedule with dates, time and locations are on the bulletin board.



Thank you for sharing poinsettias to beautify the Altar for Christmas.

Jim & Pat Stolen

Janci Treutel

Bob & Sue Doede

Sally & Clarence Johnson

Neil & Mary Munson

Kathy Groethe & Jeff Groethe

Arzelee Drown

Bruce & Kathy Knox

Harlan & Elaine Grinde

Jack & Babs Fabry

Floyd Hallberg

Judy Kort

Norm & Joan Winterhoff

Don & Dwala Smail

**Immanuel Lutheran Church
2019 Income vs Expenses**

| Month | Income Received | Expenses Paid | Difference | Spec Funds Income | Total Deposit |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| January | \$10,357 | \$14,651 | (\$4,294) | \$2,094 | \$12,451 |
| February | \$10,253 | \$12,308 | (\$2,055) | \$1441.56 | \$11,695 |
| March | \$15,304 | \$15,018 | \$286 | \$774.00 | \$16,078 |
| April | \$17,384 | \$13,164 | \$4,221 | \$1,229.01 | \$18,613 |
| May | \$9,368 | \$12,563 | (\$3,195) | \$1,645.09 | \$11,013 |
| June | \$12,492 | \$12,761 | (\$268) | \$1,947.00 | \$14,439.25 |
| July | \$12,747 | \$12,513 | \$234 | \$816.20 | \$13,563.2 |
| August | \$10,058 | \$11,804 | (\$1,746) | \$476.71 | \$10,534.71 |
| September | \$16,728 | \$10,921 | \$5,807 | \$552.06 | \$17,280.28 |
| October | \$9,644 | \$14,177 | (\$4,533) | \$442.47 | \$10,086.57 |
| November | \$12,861 | \$11,344 | \$1,518 | \$1,588.50 | \$14,449.95 |
| December | | | \$0 | | |
| Totals | \$137,197.28 | \$141,218.65 | (\$4,021) | \$13,006 | \$150,204 |

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting - Monday November 23, 2019

Members present: President Bob Henning, vice-president Linda Hulstrom, treasurer Matt Munson, financial secretary Patti Busche, secretary Mike Steltenpohl, Pastor Niveen Sarras, education Judy Nickolai, evangelism Janci Treutel, properties Jerry Nickolai, stewardship Rick Lohr, worship Judy Kort.

Members absent: none

1. Devotions were led by Pastor Niveen and Judy Kort at 6:12pm
2. The meeting was called to order by Bob Henning at 6:22pm.
3. Claudette Harring provided an update on Global Mission regarding synod to synod visits.

Companion synods began in 2006. All work is done via accompaniment. There could possibly be 90 people visiting our area in 2020, and our synod will travel to Labatla in 2022. The cost per person for that trip is approximately \$2,000 (flight and travel).

4. Pastor's report
 - a. Discussion on the letter entitled, "Will ELCA be gone in 30 years?" Declining membership is a growing concern with all ELCA congregations.
 - b. The noisy offering was discussed, and it was decided to allocate 75% to the community dinners and 25% to the Labatla parish. A motion was made by Linda and a second was made by Rick. Motion passed.
 - c. We discussed becoming a member of the Middle East Church organization at a cost of \$250/year. The congregation will vote on that at the January meeting.
5. Church officer reports

- a. Secretary report - The October secretary report was previously e-mailed to all council members and a motion was made by Rick to accept the minutes as printed. A second was made by Janci. Motion passed.
- b. Treasurer report - The Income & Expense report and the Current Position and

Designated Funds report for October was presented. The October and YTD Profit & Loss Budget Performance was also presented. A motion was made by Janci to accept and hold the treasurers report for audit. A second was made by Patti. Motion passed.

- c. Financial secretary report - Patti submitted the financial secretary report for review. A motion was made by Mike to accept and hold the financial secretary report for audit. A second was made by Rick. Motion passed.
- d. Vice-President report - no report.
- e. President report - No report.

6. Committee reports

- a. Education - 2 practices were held for the Children's program and 1 more practice to go. The program will be on Sunday Dec 22nd during the Carols and Candles service.
- b. Evangelism - Correction to the October minutes - should be Soup and Suds event was successful. The mitten tree is up.
- c. Properties - Items completed:
 - 1) Replaced and switched all small bulbs in the left side of the sanctuary with LED. (Purchased enough bulbs to finish the project).
 - 2) Replaced second hot water heat circulation pump. (Thank you to Clarence Johnson for matching).
 - 3) Repaired nursery toilet.
 - 4) Salt has been purchased for the season.
 - 5) Dan and Holly Westaby are replenishing the pails of sand.
 - 6) The big snowblower has been started and is ready for the season.
 - 7) The small snowblower has had some maintenance and is nearly ready for service.
 - 8) Called Larry Hotchkiss regarding snow removal. Larry (Immanuel neighbor) will do the sidewalks.

Items to be done:

- a. Review all air filters. Filters need to be purchased.
- b. Turn on roof heaters.

- c. New faucets in kitchen.
- d. Replace sink in sacristy.
- e. Call Schwade regarding parking lot snow removal.
- d. Social Concerns - The next community dinner will be on April 26th, 2020.
- e. Stewardship - 40 pledges were received so far for a total of \$95,887, but there should still be more to come.
- f. Youth - No report.
- g. Worship - The Wednesday pie social after service is all set. Advent Wednesday services will be at 1:00pm. The 3rd Wednesday service will be the Blue Christmas service for uplifting people in need.

7. Unfinished Business

- a. The audit committee report will be due for the next council meeting on December 19th.
- b. Policies needed for the following items:
 - c. selling church owned or donated items.
 - d. screening potential new members.
 - e. same sex members or employees.

8. New Business

- a. The next council meeting will be Monday December 23rd (this has now been changed to Thursday December 19th). Executive committee meeting at 5:30pm and full council meeting at 6:05pm.
- b. Matt will have a tentative budget prepared for the December meeting.
- c. It was discussed to have the semi-annual meeting of the congregation on Sunday

January 26th during coffee hour. A motion was made by Linda and a second was made by

Judy Kort. Motion passed.

9. A motion was made by Janci to adjourn the meeting. A second was made by Mike. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

10. Closing devotion was held by members holding hands in a circle while saying the Lord's Prayer.



Beyond Words to Action: A Call to Action

On Monday, January 20th of next year, events will be held across the country to observe the Martin Luther King, Jr. national holiday. On that day, there will be civic programs & school assemblies in various places that will focus on the life and work of Dr. King as well to highlight the civil rights movement in general.

People For The Power of Love (PFPL) is sponsoring events in Wausau that will take place the weekend prior to Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and on the day itself. These events will not just commemorate the holiday but challenge us to act. The overarching theme is “Beyond the Words: A Call to Action.” All of these events will take place at the Whitewater Music Hall located at 130 1st Street in downtown Wausau.

On Saturday, January 18th, the symposium “Into the Deep” will be held from 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. The symposium will be an interactive program of music, spoken word and discussion calling the community to engage in creative dialogue on issues of inclusion and acceptance. It will feature Chris Norfleet and David Deon of PFPL.

On Sunday, January 19th, NAOMI is partnering with PFPL to sponsor “Beyond Words to Action: Interfaith Communities Gathered for Racial Justice and Equity” that will be held from 3:30-6:30 p.m. NAOMI is the acronym North Central Area Congregations Organized to Make an Impact.

People of faith will gather to reflect on Dr. King’s legacy and to discern through group discussion possible courses of action in response to racial injustice and inequity evident today. Rev. Joe Ellwanger will speak on “Lessons from Birmingham.” He was involved in the civil rights movement in the 1960’s while he served a Lutheran church there. A simple meal will conclude the gathering. For more information contact Pastor Bill Schrub at wjschruba@gmail.com.

The 2020 observance will conclude Monday evening, January 20th with a celebration. The keynote speaker will be Ms. Brandi Greyson. She is the Founder and CEO of Urban Triage, Inc. in Madison, WI. Providing music will be The Soul Inspirations. The evening begins with cocktails at 5:30 p.m. with dinner being served at 6:00 p.m. The program will be held from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Pre-register at www.eventbrite.com

Beyond Words to Action:
Interfaith Communities Gathered for Racial Justice & Equity
Sunday, January 19, 2020 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Whitewater Music Hall 130 1st Street Wausau, WI



Pictured is Martin Luther King, Jr. who was arrested & jailed on April 12, 1963 for his leadership in his campaign to end segregation. From his jail cell, he wrote his "Letter from the Birmingham Jail;" one of his influential and seminal writings.

You are invited to join people of faith as they gather to reflect on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy and to discern possible courses of action in response to racial injustice and inequity prevalent in society today.

Guest Speaker- Rev. Joe Ellwanger. He will address the topic "Call to Action: Lessons from Birmingham." Joe is a retired ELCA Lutheran pastor. He was involved in the civil rights movement in Birmingham, AL while he served a church there during the early and mid-1960's. He is author of the book Strength For The Struggle: Insights from the Civil Rights Movement and Urban Ministry. Copies will be available for purchase.

Facilitator- Eric Giordano. He will facilitate a group discussion on "Where Do We Go From Here?" Participants will brainstorm ideas on how they can move "beyond words to action." Eric is the Executive Director of WIPPS (Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy & Service).

Meal- A simple meal will be served following the group discussion.

Registration- The gathering is open to both clergy & laypersons. All are welcome. There is no cost to attend. Registration by Event Brite will be helpful in the planning for the event. Pre-register at www.eventbrite.com.

For more information, contact Pastor Bill Schrub at wjschruba@gmail.com

The gathering is sponsored by NAOMI (North Central Area Congregations Organized to Make an Impact) in partnership with PFPL (People For the Power of Love).

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Follow Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Worship Services:
Sunday—9:00am
1st Sunday of the Month—9:00am & 11am
Fellowship Hour:
Sunday—10:15am
TV Worship Services:
Charter Cable Channel 980
5:45 pm Tuesday & 9:15am Thursday