

Immanuel Lutheran Church

20 Rocky Mountain Blvd. West
Lethbridge, Alberta
403-327-4336

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2016

NOVEMBER INTENTIONAL INTERIM PASTOR'S REPORT

During the month of October the heritage event has been taking place. If you have not had the opportunity to participate in the creation of the timeline yet, please do so. Also I would be interested to receive your observations of what you see as you look at the time line. We received input from the congregation at the celebration event. There is still time to answer the two observation questions on the slip of paper provided to the congregation. They are now located in the office. I am thankful for the committee that has implemented this heritage event. The committee consists of Bob and Marj Hedrich, Karen Barby, Shirley Masnyk, and Rita Boltezar. A report will be written which will outline some of the observations and conclusions reached.

During the month of October hope group development was begun. So far we have 3 hosts and a number of people interested in participation in these groups. This project is nearly ready to be undertaken. However there is still time for members to join a group. Please see the sign-up sheet on the announcement board.

During the month of October the development of the Interim Taskforce was undertaken. Names of candidates were solicited from the congregation and those candidates have been interviewed. Out of this process seven people have been selected to part be of the Interim Taskforce. The following are the members of the Taskforce: Katherine Canfield, Dick Dunn, Carol Eldridge, Bill Grabowsky, Don Schielke, Margita Witzke, and Don Zech. I give thanks to God for this group of dedicated volunteers and their commitment to do this important work. In the following months you can expect to be contacted by them to be part of focus groups and to receive updates on their work. Please keep them in your prayers and make yourselves available to them. Their work is to help the congregation to respond to four questions: Who are we (identity)? What do we do? (Vision, Mission, Direct), Where do we do it (context/community)? What kind of a pastor do we need to move on?

There is some progress in the healing process as

people have continued to come together in a number of different ways. However, the congregation's healing will continue to be limited as a result of lack of congregational engagement both personally and corporately with God's Word. The source of true healing can only happen through that engagement with God's Word and with one another. Where people make every effort to engage themselves in the Word there we can expect and indeed are already finding healing to be happening. Thanks be to God. I know we can do better and in fact must strive to do better.

In the very near future the congregation will need to find a pathway to resolve its past history. God is a peace making and peace loving God and His desire is that we seek peace with Him and with one another. So I encourage each member to continue steadfast in prayers for peace and for reconciliation and to seek opportunities to serve as God's ambassadors of peace with one another. Once again I know that it is the fervent desire of all whom I have met in the congregation to resolve the congregation's history and to live in peace with one another so I am confident that with God's help and with the outflowing of His mercy we can make great strides.

I am learning that Immanuel is a congregation which is very complex and diverse I am only beginning to scratch the surface of those layers of diversity and complexity.

May God continue to sustain you and bless you as each of you strive faithfully serve Him and one another.

In Christ, Pastor Rob

I LOVE MY CHURCH



During the month of November and December we are focussing our attention on Sunday mornings upon the theme, "I Love My Church." In this article I would like to help prepare you to meditate upon this theme.

First of all consider the word "love." You know the word

“love” has numerous meanings. My love for pizza for example is different from loving spouse or your love for your children. Certainly when we think of loving things such as a church it is often in a sentimental way. And that’s a good love. However, I would like to you think about the church not as a thing but as people. That is a different kind of love we are talking about. Now I want you to think about the people which make up the church as a Holy people, God’s children and your brothers and sisters. That again is different kind of love. Now I want you to remember that the head of the church is your Lord and Saviour Himself. Now your love for Christ is again a different kind of love isn’t it? Now I want you to see that the love we are talking about does not originate within ourselves but comes from outside of us. It comes to us a gift from God. It is agape love, self-sacrificing love. This gets to core of what we mean when we say “love my church.”

I also want you to consider the words, “I” and “my.” These words speak of the personal nature of our relationship to the Church or perhaps better put, within the church. The church is not “mine” in the sense that you or me or anyone is the builder of it or the owner of it. The church is always God’s possession and He is its creator. It is by the working of His Spirit by means of God’s Holy Word and His Sacraments that He calls and gathers His people together into the mystical body of His Church.

So the Third Article of the Apostles Creed is correct when it confesses, “I believe in the holy Christian Church.” In the meaning to this article of faith Luther’s Small Catechism teaches “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise up me and the all dead and will give eternal life to me and to all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

So when we say “I Love My Church,” it is not that we are expressing our possession of it but rather it’s a confession that I personally have been redeemed by the blood of Christ to be a part of the One true Church whose mission is to “agape” love one another and to reach out with the Love of God into our communities. May God bless us as we come together under this theme, “I Love My Church.”

In Christ, Pastor Rob

NEW PROJECTORS

Picture Perfect! - Hopefully, you've noticed the huge improvement to the projectors in the Sanctuary. **Thank you to**



Larry Modney for quickly organizing and installing two new projectors so that we are ALL able to worship and see the service more clearly. Unfortunately, we did not budget for this breakdown but we were lucky to get over 10 years out of the old ones. We are asking the congregation to please chip in to support the purchase of the projectors by using the blue envelopes and designate "Projectors" on the front. FaithLife will offer a matching grant for up to \$500.00 We would like to raise around \$4500.00 to cover expenses. Any residual funds will be moved into the Capital Improvements account. Thank you.

YOUTH MINUTE TO WIN IT AND PIZZA PARTY



Youth Minute to Win it and Pizza Party in the fellowship Hall Nov. 9th 6-8pm. Dinner will be provided and Youth are encouraged to bring a/few friend(s) to broaden the competition! Sign up on the bulletin board!

GREETINGS FROM LITTLE LAMBS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL!

October was a busy month for my preschoolers. We had classroom photos taken, celebrated the colour orange on Colour Day, and finished off the month with our Harvest Halloween Parties. In November, the preschool will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Interfaith Food Bank. If you want to donate any food items on behalf of the Preschool, there will be a box located outside the classroom.



God Bless,
Teacher Carmen

GREETINGS FROM PUERTO PENASCO, MEXICO

On October 16th, Miles and I headed to the barrio to see if we might find some of our families at home on a Sunday afternoon. We had a lovely visit with Maria and the children at their home, which was Immanuel's project last year. Everyone is doing well. Both the father, Jose Luis, and the oldest son, Antonio, and working six days a week at construction projects. At the home property, they have added a covered patio to the house. The garden area is gone due to the lack of

water. Apparently earlier this year, they were out of water for 2 months due to some problems with wells in the area. Now, the water is available but at very low pressure so they are collecting it and then manually bucketing it to the rooftop to fill the tank that allows them to have water and water pressure for showers and flushing the toilet. It's a good thing that there are strong men in that household.

Needless to say, Maria does not have her meager crop of chilies to make salsa. Instead, they have planted a couple of really nice mesquite trees in the yard for shade.

Travelling a little further north to our "first" neighbourhood, we found Guadelupe's family at home. They are the neighbours of single-mom Maritza and her boys, whom we built for in 2013. It was great to hear that Maritza is now working at the Mayan Palace as a housekeeper. Because that resort is rather far out, it provides a bus service for their employees. The downside is that she is away from the boys for quite a long day. The upside, however, is that Victor and Hector are looked after by a family member who lives near their school.

The home that Guadelupe lives in is nothing more than a shell. We have some donated beds to deliver in the next few days so that the children can have a decent place to sleep. This family could certainly use a renovation of the interior and roof plus an indoor bathroom.

The same scenario applies to the multi-generational Castro family just a couple of blocks away. What has happened is that these families received homes years ago that were constructed without any interior work and without plumbing. Over time roofs are damaged and although we have little rain here, when it does rain the leaks cause havoc to beds and other furnishings. Folks don't seem to have any funds to keep up with repairs or make improvements.

It is a blessing to visit with the families that we have come to know over these past few years. The generous support from our congregation has allowed us to assist them by providing functional improvements to their properties so that they can live more comfortably. I look forward to planning our project (s) for 2017 and ask for your prayers as we consider who might be recipients of God's blessings through Immanuel's servants.

Next up will be planning for our annual Santa Run where we distribute food and gifts to our Mexican friends. This is always such a joy!

(Every time I use the word "joy", I am reminded of Pastor Rob's children's message: **J**-Jesus first, **O**- then others, **Y**- then yourself). Yes, it's definitely a J-O-Y!

In His Service,

Shirley Masnyk

MOM'S TIME

All mothers are encouraged and welcome to join our Moms group. This group is an opportunity to build community by providing an open, caring and accepting atmosphere where women can come together to share & learn. A place for mentoring where mature women listen, encourage and offer information and perspectives gained through experience. A place for practical instruction, teaching focuses on areas of common interest, offering inspiration and information that is relevant to the life of a mother. **Interested?** Our Moms group meets the 2nd & 4th Thursday mornings of the month from 9:30 -11:30 a.m. Next sessions are Nov 10th & 24th. The program is free and everyone is welcome. For more information please call Katherine Canfield Parish Coordinator 403-327-4336 or 403-756-2149.

VOTER'S MEETING

Fall Voter's Meeting - All members of Immanuel who are 18 years of age or older are invited to participate in the meeting of the **Voter's Assembly** which is scheduled for Sunday, November 27th following the 11:00 a.m. worship service. We will hear reports from our various Boards, vote on the 2017 proposed budget will have elections for Parish Planning Council members. Our nominating committee - Vicki Demers, Walter Egli and Carole McDermot will be approaching you to serve on council. We would ask that you prayerfully consider serving on PPC.

TURKEY DINNER & SILENT AUCTION

Immanuel's Annual Turkey Dinner and Silent Auction is about three weeks away Nov.19, 2016.

Volunteers Needed: to help with the organization of this fantastic event. Speak to Katherine 403-756-2149 if you can help out. Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board for volunteer opportunities.

We are also looking for and appreciate all donations of **New** or **Never Used** items for our silent auction. Donated items can be dropped off at the church office. Please attach your name to the donation for recognition, otherwise your donation will be labeled anonymous donor. Thank you for your generosity.

Tickets are available between services on Sunday or Mon-Friday from 8:30 -2:30 p.m. from the church office. Tickets: \$20 per adult and \$10 for children 17 years & under. All funds raised go toward the Operating Fund and FaithLife Financial will match funds raised to maximum of \$500.



GERMAN LESSONS AND CAROLS

Immanuel Lutheran Church will host our annual German language service of Lessons and Carols here on Dec. 11th at 2:30 p.m.



Immanuel Lutheran Church Financial Statement, SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

Year to Date	Budgeted	Income	Disbursements
September 30, 2016	253,703.25	233,438.49	242,983.82
Month of Sept 2016	28,189.25	24,196.00	27,844.10



- ◆ We have new projectors (thanks Larry Modney) to the tune of \$5000.
- ◆ Our telephone system has been upgraded and thanks to Tyler Rodgers we are saving \$400 per month.
- ◆ Volunteers made lunch for 200 people at a recent funeral held at Immanuel.
- ◆ Our food train needs more volunteers! Please sign up on the calendar in the narthex.
- ◆ The "Empty Spools" quilting group recently donated pillows, afgans and quilts to the relief efforts in Ft. McMurray. These were divided between Trinity Lutheran Church and the Salvation Army. This group meets every Wednesday from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. Come join in!

Remember to set your clocks back on Sunday, November 6/16



GOD AND THE SPIDER

During World War II, a US marine was separated from his unit on a Pacific Island. The fighting has been intense, and in the smoke and the crossfire he had lost touch with his comrades. Alone in the jungle, he could hear enemy soldiers coming in his direction. Scrambling for cover, he found his way up a high ridge to several small caves in the rock. Quickly he crawled inside one of the caves. Although safe for the moment, he realized that once the enemy soldiers looking for him swept up the ridge, they would quickly search all the caves and he would be killed. As he waited, he prayed, "Lord, if it be Your will, please protect me. Whatever Your will though, I love You and trust You. Amen." After praying, he lay quietly listening to the enemy begin to draw close. He thought, "Well, I guess the Lord isn't going to help me out of this one." Then he saw a spider begin to build a web over the front of his cave. As he watched, listening to the enemy searching for him all the while, the spider layered strand after strand of web across the opening of the cave. "Hah," he thought. "What I need is a brick wall and what the Lord has sent me is a spider web. God does have a sense of humor." As the enemy drew closer he watched from the darkness of his hideout and could see them searching one cave after another. As they came to his, he got ready to make his last stand. To his amazement, however, after glancing in the direction of his cave, they moved on. Suddenly, he realized that with the spider web over the entrance, his cave looked as if no one had entered for quite a while.

"Lord, forgive me," prayed the young man. "I had forgotten that in You a spider's web is stronger than a brick wall." We all face times of great trouble. When we do, it is so easy to forget what God can work in our lives, sometimes in the most surprising ways. And remember with God, a mere spider's web becomes a brick wall of protection.

