

# Immanuel's History...

In March of 1979, approximately 30 people gathered at the Memorial Building (In Central Park) and were led in worship by Pastor Carl Lueders of Victor, Iowa. Thus began the Grinnell Mission Church.

By May, the group selected "Immanuel" for its name. Immanuel means "God's with us. It is from the Gospel of Matthew 1:23.

Later in 1979 a gift of land was received to be used as a building site for a house of worship.

In January of 1980, Immanuel secured her Articles of Incorporation from the State of Iowa. Soon after a Constitution was drafted and received approval from the Iowa District East. Immanuel was an "official" congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

In May of 1981, the first resident Pastor of Immanuel, Reverend Fred Zimmermann, was installed as Pastor. Later that month, groundbreaking services for the construction of the church building were held. The first worship service was held in the sanctuary in November of 1981. In January of 1982 the building was dedicated.

Following Pastor Zimmermann's pastorate, the Reverend James D. Kirk accepted the Divine call issued by the congregation and served Immanuel from June of 1987 until 1990.

August 19, 1990, Reverend David T. Brandt was installed as pastor and faithfully served Immanuel for the following 26 years.

The need for Christian Education classrooms was already urgent when Immanuel celebrated their ten year anniversary in 1989. The 10th anniversary offering was designated for this purpose and additional funds were gradually added. In 1997 a building committee was selected. Also selected was Ephesians 2:19-22 as a Scripture basis for the effort with the theme of “Building Together with Christ.” An eight classroom plus multipurpose area was selected. Ground breaking occurred in March of 1999. The construction of the addition was greatly aided by the assistance of the Laborers for Christ organization. The addition was placed into use and dedicated in late 1999.

Immanuel’s 25th Anniversary was celebrated throughout 2004. Again Ephesians 2 served as a theme passage with “Christ is our Cornerstone” as the anniversary theme. The return of all the pastors who had served Immanuel on September 19 was the highlight.

Immanuel’s 30th year of proclaiming God’s grace in Jesus Christ was celebrated by a yearlong emphasis on church and personal projects under the heading of “Mission 30.” The 30th anniversary worship service held in June of 2009 directed the congregation to proclaim “Christ crucified.” The service theme was “Lift high the Cross”. A community open house with games, food and entertainment was an additional highlight of the year.

“Great is Thy Faithfulness” was the hymn and theme of the mortgage burning celebration that occurred in June of 2010. Thanks were expressed by all members and former members of the congregation as well as the approximately 46,000 members of Iowa District East who generously supported the congregation during her early years, but especially to the faithfulness of our gracious God who enabled this milestone to be reached.

With Immanuel being mortgage free, emphasis on specific local, district, national and international mission projects is ongoing. The 2011 yearlong theme of “Called to Live, Lead and Love in Christ” based on Galatians 2:20 and Philippians 1:3-6 provide guidance and inspiration as we strive to celebrate and live out God’s presence and gifts to us.

Blessed with young families and many energetic youngsters, a new playset and swing set was added in 2012. It has already provided many hours of fun for both the congregation and neighborhood children.

Immanuel enjoys a Big sister/Little sister relationship with St. Silas Lutheran Church of North Liberty. St. Silas received the Divine Service for the first time on February 3rd, 2013.

On August 20, 2015, Immanuel celebrated Rev. David Brandt's outstanding milestone as our faithful pastor for 25 years.

The following year, in May 2016, Rev. Brandt respectfully retired. A reception was held in his honor on April 24, 2016.

From May 2016 to August 2017, circuit visitor Rev. Fred L. Berry of Trinity Lutheran Church in Dillon, served as vacancy pastor.

In July of 2017, Immanuel placed the Divine Call to Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koepp of Wood Lake, Minnesota. Rev. Koepp accepted Immanuel's call and was installed on August 20, 2017.

The 40th anniversary worship service was held December 30, 2018. The service theme was "Immanuel: God With Us" based on 1 Kings 8:54-57". A special reception was held after the service.