

Immanuel Lutheran Church

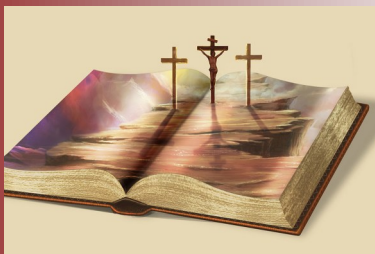
OCTOBER 2025



1002 Powell Avenue

Erie PA 16505

814-833-4062



This Month at a Glance

- ◇ **Grace & Peace From the Pastor's Desk**
- ◇ **October Pastoral Coverage**
- ◇ **Immanuel's Constitution**
- ◇ **Worship & Music**
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- ◇ **Fellowship Luncheon Announcement & Information**
- ◇ **Medicare 101 Presentation**
- ◇ **Blessing of the Animals Community Service**
- ◇ **Holy Trinity Dinner**
- ◇ **Trail of Treats**
- ◇ **Women of the ELCA Fall Gathering**
- ◇ **All Saints Day**
- ◇ **Mitten Tree Information**
- ◇ **Prayer List**
- ◇ **Celebration of Life & Love**
- ◇ **West Millcreek Food Pantry**
- ◇ **Worship Calendar**
- ◇ **The Color Red**
- ◇ **Recipe of the Month**
- ◇ **October Calendar**
- ◇ **Staff & Council Information**

If you have anything you would like in the November Newsletter, please get it to Brenda by October 23rd.



Grace & Peace : From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Karen will be on vacation September 9-16

"I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" Psalm 122:1

I have recently read the book "Anatomy of a Revived Church" written by Thom S. Rainer and presented a portion of it to the Congregational Council, but I believe it to be important enough to share with each of you. Rainer wrote the book after studying churches that chose to die and publishing "Autopsy of Deceased Church" in 2014 with hopes of keeping other churches alive. That book was very successful. Rainer then determined he needed to write a book on healthy churches that thrive; thus "Anatomy of a Revived Church" was published in 2020.

There are 7 outstanding characteristics of churches that thrive, each a chapter in Rainer's second book. The overriding thought is that the churches he studied chose to change before they died. Is it important to you that Immanuel Lutheran survives beyond your lifetime? Are you invested enough to work to keep the church alive? If so, this article is for you.

The first chapter is Accepting Responsibility. Stop looking at other people or situations to blame for the decline in attendance. If you would, read Acts 6:1-7 and determine how the church in Jerusalem moved from blame to obedience and discover the immediate result of their obedience. Then ask yourself what it means to accept responsibility.

Chapter 2 is Overcoming the Traps of Tradition. Begin with prayer. Pray for Immanuel. Ask God for discernment of anything that Immanuel holds onto simply because it is for our own comfort, routine, or preference rather than having a God-centered purpose.

Expanding the Scorecard is the name of the third chapter. What on earth does a church have that requires a scorecard? Its health. The scorecards are attendance, financial giving, group-ministry, and conversions. Do we pay attention to what our church is doing as a group to minister to others? Do we know how many people have been converted to Christians because of our ministry?

Chapter 4: Committing to Powerful Prayer. "I have yet to see a sustained church that was not undergirded by a powerful movement of prayer" (Rainer, Anatomy of a Revived Church, pg. 59). Do you have any ideas for how a prayer ministry can take place at Immanuel?

The characteristic discussed in Chapter 5 is Dealing with Toxins. Things will not get better on their own, the problem does not get better when ignored, it gets worse. Negativity and disunity will destroy a church. If you would, read Matthew 18:15-17.

Seeking Silver Bullets No More is the title of Chapter 6. The silver bullet sentence begins with, “If only we had...” Rainer says that if you depend on silver bullets as a solution it is guaranteed not to happen (pg. 84). What revitalizes a church is members, the majority of the members, not just a few, take responsibility to follow God’s lead and do the work of the church. If you will, read Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 1:8.

The seventh principle found in Chapter 7 is Choosing Meaningful Membership. “Membership is not having your name on a roll,... Ultimately, membership is about belonging and contributing” (Rainer. Anatomy of a Revived Church, pgs. 96-97). Contributing means more than financial contributions. It means praying for the church, discerning where God needs you to minister with the church, and acting on that discernment.

The book closes with the conclusion: Change or Die. The subtitles are: Beyond Worship Wars, Beyond Prolonged Meetings, Beyond Facility Focus, Beyond Program Driven, Beyond Inwardly Focused Budgets, Beyond Inordinate Demands for Pastoral Care, Beyond Attitudes of Entitlement, Beyond Anger and Blame, Beyond Evangelistic Apathy and Beyond Resistance to Change.

I share this book with you because I care about the ministry of Immanuel Lutheran, and I want to see you live abundantly. I invite you, if you are concerned about our church, to get a copy of the book and read it. If there is interest in discussing the book we can get together and do so, but discussing isn’t the end, praying isn’t the end, these are just the beginnings of a new chapter.

Most of you know that I will be having a total knee replacement on Oct. 2. Bill and I have chosen for me to stay with my friend Sue in Franklin for the first few weeks of recovery because of our dogs and the danger they pose to my recovery. However, I will be available to talk on my cell phone, so if there’s anything you need, please don’t hesitate to call me on my cell 724-557-2386. (Emergency pastoral coverage will be available through Rev. Jean Kuebler, Rev. Tom Glascoe, and Rev. Ron King.)

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Karen





Pastoral Emergency Coverage for the Month of October

While Pastor Karen recovers from her knee replacement, she will be available by phone, however she will not be doing any emergency visits during the month of October.

If you have a pastoral emergency, you can contact the pastor who will be covering.

October 2—8: Rev. Jean Kuebler (717) 440-3575

October 9—21: Rev. Tom Glascoe (814) 480-8529

October 22-31: Rev. Jean Kuebler (717) 440-3575



Pastor is “hoping” to only be out for two weeks to recover. The two weeks she is out coverage for Sunday Service is as follows:

October 5th we will be welcoming Pastor Allie Leitzel as she leads us in worship.

October 12th we will be welcoming Jen Kuntz as she leads our worship service.

Let's all pray for a speedy recovery and return of Pastor Karen.



Reviewing Immanuel's Constitution – For Communication and Transparency

As some of you know, the congregation had a Listening Committee from the North Western PA Synod interview church members on August 28 and 29 of this year. Unfortunately this event was not widely publicized and many of you were not aware of the opportunity to speak with the committee. However, we have received the results, and their recommendations are for the congregation council to review our church's constitution. Since Immanuel's constitution hasn't been updated in a few years, and as the 2025 Churchwide Assembly has produced a new model constitution for congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (current as of August 2025), your congregational council has determined to update the constitution (as necessary) as we review it together with the bishop or her representative present at our council meetings.

The church council has been directed to review Chapter 9 for our upcoming meeting on October 12, 2025. Any changes to the current constitution must be voted on by the congregation. I will do my best to keep you informed of the discussion and changes to the constitution. (Please know that any church member can attend a council meeting.)

Pastor Karen



Bring your angelic voice and join us for choir!

We would LOVE some new voices to join us!



Join your Immanuel Family the first Sunday of every month following worship. We meet in the lounge for coffee & goodies! The bonus is the wonderful conversation, laughs and spending time making memories with your church family!

Please waltz into the lounge to share a smile and say hi! EVERYONE is welcome!



If you forgot or weren't aware, the first Sunday of each month is Quarter Sunday! Grab a handful of quarters and drop them in the collection plate!

Bible Study is on Thursday at Noon and Friday at 6 pm. We are studying the book of Revelation. There is still time to join us!



Social Ministry

The Social Ministry committee would like to thank all those that donated items to the Community Shelter Services to support the tiny homes at the Kiwanis Family Village. We had many sheet sets, towels, blankets, various cleaning supplies, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hygiene products, baby wipes, first aid items and \$30 in monetary donations. Thank you to Tom and Judy Stewart for delivering the items to the shelter.

Thank You...

*******Just a note!** Social Ministry has decided not to collect for Coats for Kids this year.*****

“SOCKTOBER”

For the month of October we are collecting socks for men, women & children. These donations will be going to the Erie City Mission. Please place your donation in the blue box in the





THANK YOU!

Thanks to your donation, we can continue to grow the Kiwanis Family Village and keep families together! Your support means the world to those struggling the most!

Community Shelter Services
 655 W. 16th Street PITTSBURGH PA 150
 Erie, PA 16502 19 SEP 2025 PM 1:11

Dear Debbie,

On behalf of Community Shelter Services, I would like to thank you for your generous donation! Your kindness allows our homeless shelter to continue helping our struggling neighbors in the Erie community.

Each night, we provide for about 200 homeless individuals – of all ages – with a safe place, a nutritious meal, and a warm bed.

Community Shelter Services works with individuals, families with children, and veterans to assure they have the tools and programs available to them to help get them back on the right path.

Sincerely,
 Diane Lagette, Executive Director

Immanuel Lutheran Church
 ATTN: Debbie Madurski
 1002 Powell Ave
 Erie, PA 16505

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Community Shelter Services
 www.communityshelter.org

655 W. 16th Street

Thank You



**ATTENTION TO ALL THE BEAUTIFUL
OCTOGENARIAN AND UP CONGREGATIONAL
MEMBERS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

We want to celebrate you! We want to show you our love and appreciation and celebrate your birth and your dedication to the Lord.

**A light luncheon of appetizers and desserts will be held from
Noon—2 pm, October 25th.**

We ask that you bring a dish to share.

Let's all show our love and appreciation!! *EVERYONE* is invited to share in this special event! Come out and share your memories and make some new ones!!!

*******IF ANYONE NEEDS A RIDE PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE CHURCH OFFICE (814) 833-4062 AND WE WILL ARRANGE TO GET YOU HERE*******

**FELLOWSHIP
LUNCH NOVEMBER
15TH at
NOON**

During the August Council Meeting it was decided that Immanuel will have a Fellowship Lunch every month for those who would like to come. **The first luncheon will be held on Saturday, November 15th at noon.**

We are hoping to bring everyone together to share a meal and conversation as the loving family Immanuel truly is. Let's all sit down together break bread and share conversation to help build our family bonds stronger.

Our dinners will all be a dish to pass. If you are able to bring a dish please do. If you would like to come and need a ride, please reach out to the church office 814-833-4062 and we will arrange to get you here.

****Make sure to watch the bulletin and the newsletter each month for the date of the Fellowship Lunch****

Medicare 101

Presentation by Steven Kehl

Monday, October 6, 6:00 p.m.

at Faith Lutheran Church, 5414 E. Lake Rd.



Steven is a local licensed Medicare agent who for years has been helping folks in our community understand their Medicare options. His goal is to make things simple, clear, and maybe even a little enjoyable.

The presentation will cover the basics of social security and Medicare, with plenty of time for questions. This educational community event, sponsored by Faith's Social Ministry committee, is free and open to the public.

CALLING ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL!



COMMUNITY BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SERVICE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2:00 P.M.

**AT THE HARBORCREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
5661 BUFFALO RD. (UNDER THE PAVILION)**

- You can bring your pet (or a picture of your pet) to this informal worship service
- Each animal will receive an individual blessing
- Water and treat bags provided
- Donations will be received for the A.N.N.A. Shelter.
- Rain or shine
- All animals should be appropriately leashed, caged, or otherwise safely under control; thanks!
- All are welcome!

HOSTED BY FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH AND FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HARBORCREEK
FOR MORE INFO, CALL 814-899-9653.



Our annual Holy Trinity Thursday night dinner will be on October 30th.

We will be preparing our traditional meal of sloppy joes, pasta salad, applesauce, cupcakes and Carpi Sun to drink. There will also be a bowl of Halloween candy as an extra treat.

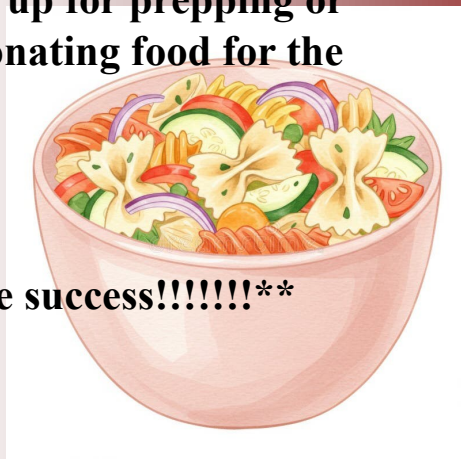
We are looking for volunteers to help cook and serve.

Volunteers will need to be at Holy Trinity at 4 pm as we will be serving dinner beginning at 5 pm.

PLEASE join us as we feed those in need. Bring your smile and optimism and let's brighten the day of other's! Help keep this wonderful tradition alive!

Look for a sign up sheet on the bulletin board to sign up for prepping or volunteering. There will also be a sign up sheet for donating food for the meal.

****Keep an eye out to see what foods it is that we will need donated to make this amazing cause a huge success!!!!!!****



TRAIL OF TREATS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31ST 6 PM—8 PM

Every year we make sure we have candy and fun for the little trick or treaters wandering through the neighborhood. By participating, we are keeping the kids safe and still giving the opportunity to be able to enjoy the tradition of trick-or-treating.

Your donations of candy would be GREATLY appreciated! We are accepting donations from now through Halloween.

We are in need of volunteers to pass out candy during our Trail of Treats.

Sign up today!!!!



ERIE REGION – FALL GATHERING

SATURDAY, November 1, 2026

Luther Memorial Church
225 West 10th Street

10:00 – David Olson, Master Gardner, will share a program on native plants for NWPA and demonstrate how to start them from seed during the winter.

11:00 – Erie Region Business meeting

12:00 or sooner – Lunch includes assorted wraps and vegetable tray (catered by Cali's), beverage (coffee, water, lemonade) and dessert. Gluten free is available on request, just check the box under your name.

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Mail your reservation to Pat Bellingham with \$15 by October 25, 2025:

Name _____

Congregation _____ ☐ Gluten free please ☐

Pat Bellingham, 128 Hathaway St. W., Girard, PA 16417 |

Make checks payable to Luther Memorial Women of the

ELCA Please feel free to copy this flyer to share.

Reservations are required.



All Saints Day



GRACIOUS GOD, OPEN MY EARS TO
HEAR THE MESSAGE YOU HAVE
PREACHED IN THE LIVES OF THOSE
UPON WHOSE SHOULDERS I AM
STANDING TODAY. BY THE POWER OF
YOUR HOLY SPIRIT MAY WHAT WAS
ALIVE IN THEM BE ALIVE IN ME. IN THE
NAME OF THE ONE WHO DEFEATED
DEATH AND OPENED THE WAY TO
ETERNAL LIFE, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.
AMEN.

All Saints Sunday is on November 2nd at which time Immanuel Lutheran will be remembering in prayer the members of our congregation who have passed away in the preceding year.

We invite you to share the names of anyone who has passed away that you would like a prayer for. Please let the office know by October 23rd if you have a name that you would like added to the list.



*****ATTENTION*****

We are announcing the date for our Mitten Tree collection early this year!!! We want to make sure you are prepared.

On November 16th the Mitten Trees will be placed in the Narthex and there will be one in the Lounge.

We will be collecting:

Mittens, Hats, Scarves & Gloves.

This collection is to benefit the children of Bethesda.



Please remember the members of Immanuel who are “shut in,” or having some health challenges and cannot make it to service, you may want to offer them a ride, give them a friendly call, send them a card. Maybe just stop to share a moment of your time.

The current Shut-In Mailing List is available in the office.



If you are sick or in the hospital, please notify the church office.

If you would like home communion or a copy of our newsletter, please contact the office.



KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Pastor Karen Kostur

Denise Arnold

Vince Belinski—Diane's Nephew

Karen Byrd

Rev. Bill Cox

Chick Crosby (Sally Leubin's brother)

Janice Kreger

MaryAnn Long and Russ Long

Penney Maloney

The Botwright family

Connie Cooper

Jim and Lorraine Hornaman

Rich Hornaman

Kyle Husted

Carol Ketchel

Diane McGranor

Brenda Matson

Carole Rickrode

Bob Roemer

Alice Tillotson—Mary Hauser's sister

Joel Whickham—Mary Hauser's brother

Leslie Woodruff—Carole Rickrode's Granddaughter

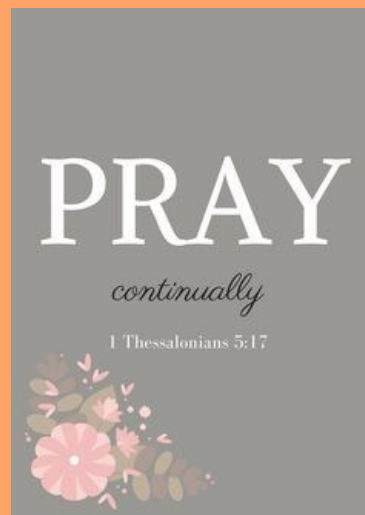
Logan Wrisley —Brenda Matson's son

All of our members & friends who are grieving;

Who are in nursing homes;

All who are ill at home

We pray for those in the military.



October Celebrations of Life and Love



10/8 Kenneth Kreger

10/11 Penny Maloney

10/21 Bill Kostur

10/23 Karen Kostur

10/23 Ronald Madurski

10/23 Sandy Moore

10/12 Zach & Ron Middaugh

10/22 Karen & Bill Kostur

10/27 William & Sandy Moore

Capital Campaign - Boiler:

Funds for the boiler campaign currently show

\$35,642.38

toward our goal of \$58,803.

Pennies for Poverty

collection is an ongoing effort in support of the Women of the ELCA – donations welcome in the Donation Center canister.



LITTLE FREE PANTRY AT IMMANUEL

IF IN NEED – TAKE SOMETHING

IF YOU CAN SHARE - LEAVE SOMETHING

**Feel free to bring items to church office &
we will make sure they get in the pantry for you.**

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Support West Millcreek Food Pantry
with cereal and baked beans--or any
canned fruits or vegetables or tuna.

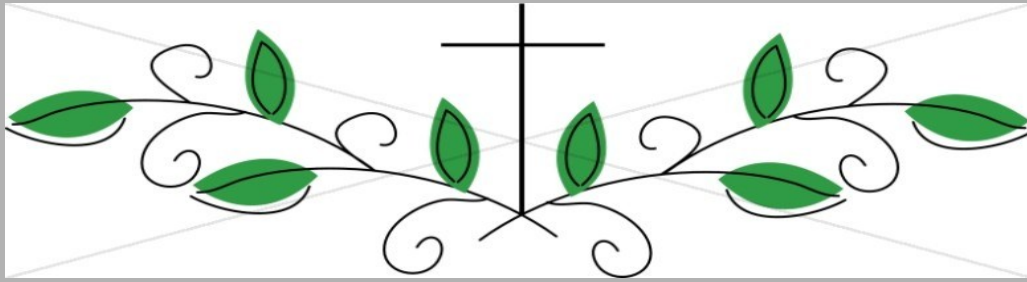


Due to recent changes in funding, West Millcreek Food Pantry has seen shortages of canned fruits and vegetables and canned tuna.

Non-perishable items such as diapers, feminine hygiene products, toiletries, and pet foods are also always appreciated.

Checks can be made out to “West Millcreek Food Pantry;” there is an envelope for donations on the basket in the lobby.





ate	Presider	Assistant	Lector
10/05/2025 9:30 AM	Allie Leitzel	Bob Dorler	Bob Dorler
10/12/2025 9:30 AM	Jennifer Kuntz	Debbie Redditt	Rick Kuntz
10/19/2025 9:30AM	Kostur	Cindy Geddes	Cindy Geddes
10/26/2025 9:30 AM	Kostur		



The Color Red and Why it is so Important

In the Lutheran religion, the color red symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit, seen at Pentecost, and the blood of Christ and the martyrs. It is used for events and seasons associated with the Holy Spirit's presence and power, such as Pentecost, as well as for commemorating martyrs, celebrating the Reformation, and during events like ordinations and installations. Red represents passion, fervor, and strength, reflecting the life-giving power of the Spirit and the willingness of the faithful to shed their blood for Christ.

The Holy Spirit:

- ◇ Red is the color of fire, symbolizing the descending flames of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost, when the church was born.

Martyrs:

- ◇ It honors the martyrs, those who have shed their blood for the Christian faith and, and serves as encouragement for current believers to be resolute in their own faith.

Reformation:

- ◇ Red is the liturgical color for Reformation Sunday, symbolizing the power of the Holy Spirit that inspired the movement and its lasting message of grace.

Passion & Fervor:

- ◇ The color red embodies zeal and fervent commitment to the Christian faith, representing a powerful display of God's love and the strength God's people are given.

Festive Occasions:

- ◇ Red is also a festive color used for other congregational celebrations, such as dedications, anniversaries, and ordinations, highlighting the celebratory nature of these events.

Chicken Stew and dumplings

Chicken Stew:

- 1 (3 pound) rotisserie chicken
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 ribs celery, sliced thin
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 (14.5 ounce) cans chicken broth
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound new potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch dice
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried basil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon dried thyme



Dumplings:

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons cold butter, cubed
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk, or more as needed
- 2 tablespoons dried dill

To prepare the stew: Debone rotisserie chicken; cut meat into chunks or shred. Set aside.

Melt butter in a large Dutch oven over medium heat; cook and stir onion and celery in hot butter until soft, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and whisk continuously to make a thick roux, about 2 minutes. Slowly pour in broth, whisking to remove any lumps. Add potatoes, frozen vegetables, salt, black pepper, basil, and thyme. Cover and cook over medium heat until vegetables are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in chicken meat and continue to simmer.

Meanwhile, make the dumplings: Combine flour, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl; cut in butter with 2 knives or a pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in milk and dill until dough comes together.

Drop rounded tablespoonfuls of dough into simmering stew. Cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Cover and cook until dumplings are tender, 8 to 10 minutes more.



2025

1	2	3	4			
Tops 9:30 am		AA 7 pm				
AA Mtg 7:30 pm		Game Night 7 pm				
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Worship 9:30 am w/ Allie Leitzel	Quilters 9:30 am	AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Tops 9:30 am	Bible Study 11 am	Bible Study 6 pm	
Sun	Flagship City Chorus 7 pm		AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Choir 12 pm	AA 7 pm	
Quarter Sunday					Game Night 7 pm	
Coffee Hour						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Worship 9:30 am	Quilters 9:30 am	AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Tops 9:30 am	Bible Study 11 am	Bible Study 6 pm	
	Flagship City Chorus 7 pm		AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Choir 12 pm	AA 7 pm	
Pastor Appreciation Day				Book Club 7 pm	Game Night 7 pm	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Worship 9:30 am	Quilters 9:30 am	AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Tops 9:30 am	Bible Study 11 am	Bible Study 6 pm	Octogenarian & Up Luncheon 12 -2 pm
	Flagship City Chorus 7 pm		AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Choir 12 pm	AA 7 pm	
				Holy Trinity Dinner 4 pm	Game Night 7 pm	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Worship 9:30 am	Quilters 9:30 am	AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Tops 9:30 am	Bible Study 11 am	Bible Study 6 pm	
	Flagship City Chorus 7 pm		AA Mtg 7:30 pm	Choir 12 pm	AA 7 pm	
					Trail of Treats	

Immanuel

Church Office 814-833-4062

Office Hours

8:30—12:30 Monday—Thursday

Staff

Pastor Karen Kostur 814-833-4062

or Cell#: 724-557-2386

Pastor's Office Hours – Tuesday 1:00-3:00

Thursday, 9:30am-2:00pm

Church Caretaker: Wally Coughlin

Organist/Music Director: Allan Slovenkay

Admin. Ofc.: Brenda Matson

Sunday School

Coord: Anita Byrne & Janice
Kreger

Teachers: Anita Byrne & Pastor
Kostur & Brenda Durst

2025 Congregation & Church Council Officers

Pres: Rick Kuntz 814-572-3719

VP: Joe Byrne 814-397-7319

Sec.: Brenda Durst 814-873-0451

Fin. Sec.: Debbie Redditt 814-449-1855

Treasurer: Bill Redditt 814-833-9756

Church Council Committees

*We invite all members of Immanuel to join any of these
committees and/or offer your gifts where you can –
many hands make light work!!*

Council usually meets the 2nd Sunday of the month

Fellowship, Outreach & Growth

Council liaisons: Sally Leubin

COFFEE HOUR 1ST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

ONGOING COLLECTION FOR LITTLE FREE PANTRY

Finance

Council liaison: Zack Middaugh

ANNUAL Budget

Property

Council liaison: Rick Kuntz

Committee Chair: Debbie Redditt

FACILITY MAINTENANCE

RENTAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

ONGOING BOILER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Stewardship

Council liaison: Dave Mays

Social Ministry Committee

Committee chair: Debbie Madurski

Council Liaison: Brenda Durst

Worship & Music

Liaison to Worship: Joe Byrne

Christian Education

Council liaison: Mary Hauser

Check out our website and "FRIEND" us on [Facebook](#)

**Did you miss church? Need to keep updated and
want easy access to the church calendar, newsletter
or annual report?**

Check out our website <http://www.ilc-erie.org/>