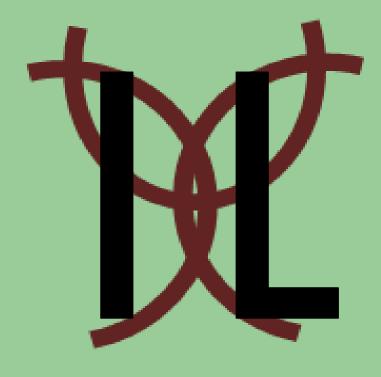
### IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH March 2025





1002 Powell Avenue Erie PA 16505

814-833-4062



- From the Pastor's Desk (2 pages)
- Wednesday Lent Services
- Bible Study & Social Ministry
- Worship & Music
- **Help Wanted**
- Social Ministry
- 2025 Soup-Off (3 pages with photos)
- Easter Flower Order & Meals-on-Wheels Donation Form
- 2024 Mitten Tree
- \* Thank You Letter
- \* Open House
- Events Being Held at Immanuel
- Prayer List
- Celebrations of Life and Love
- Bowling for Julia House
- Important March Information
- \* The Green Corner
- History of Ash Wednesday (2 pages)
- Worship Calander
- Monthly Calander of Events at Immanuel
- Church Council & Staff

Submissions for the April News Letter will need to be given to Brenda by March 24th. Thank you so much!

### **Grace & Peace : From the Pastor's Desk**



Lent is a season of introspection, sacrifice, and spiritual renewal that prepares us for the celebration of Easter. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 5 this year. Many of us will begin the season with ashes reminding us that we are human beings. It lasts for 40 days, ending on Holy Saturday, and does not include Sundays. These days remind us of the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness, where he resisted the temptations of Satan. It is a time for Christians to imitate Jesus' example by engaging in practices such as prayer and fasting.

One of the most well-known Lenten traditions is the act of "giving up" or fasting from something as a form of remorse. While many choose to give up sweets, social media, or caffeine, there is a deeper, more meaningful aspect to this tradition: giving up something bad. This means identifying and fasting from behaviors, habits, or attitudes that are harmful to our spiritual growth and well-being.

The first step in this journey is reflection. Take time to consider the aspects of your life that may be pulling you away from God's grace. These could include negative thoughts, harmful behaviors, or toxic relationships. It might be helpful to keep a journal during this reflective period, noting down any patterns or recurring issues that you observe.

Negative Thoughts and Self-Talk: Many of us struggle with internal dialogues that are critical and unkind. These thoughts can undermine our self-esteem and affect our relationships with others. For Lent, try to replace negative self-talk with affirmations and prayers that remind you of your worth in God's eyes. Harmful Behaviors: Look at your daily habits. Are there practices that are unhealthy or destructive? This could be anything from excessive use of alcohol or tobacco to spending too much time on the computer or in front of the television. By giving up these habits, you create space for healthier practices that honor your body in your relationship with God. Toxic Relationships: Sometimes, the most challenging things to give up are relationships that are harmful. This doesn't necessarily mean cutting people out of your life but rather setting boundaries and seeking healthier ways of interacting. Lent can be a time to focus on forgiveness, reconciliation, or simply distancing yourself from negativity.

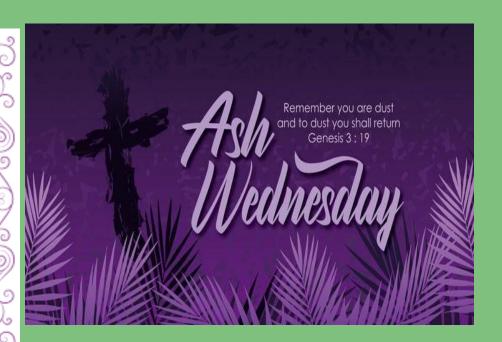
The act of giving up something bad for Lent is not about self-punishment, it is about transformation. Through this we have an opportunity to grow closer to God, to become more like Christ, and to enhance our spiritual well-being. There are many benefits in doing so: *Spiritual Growth*: When we let go of things that hinder our relationship with God, we create room for spiritual growth. Prayer and meditation become more profound as we clear the clutter from our minds and hearts. *Improved Well-being*: Letting go of harmful habits can lead to significant improvements in our physical, emotional, and mental health. We feel lighter, more energetic, and more at peace. *Strengthened Relationships*: By giving up negative behaviors and thoughts, we open ourselves up to healthier, more loving relationships. This can lead to deeper connections with family, friends, and members of our church community.

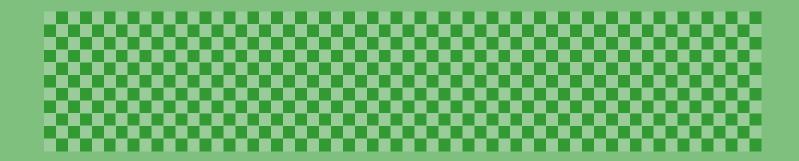
Successfully giving up something bad for Lent requires intention, effort, and support. Here are some practical steps to help you on this journey: Set Clear Goals: Define what you are giving up and why. Write it down and keep it somewhere visible as a daily reminder of your commitment. *Pray for Guidance*: Ask God for the strength and wisdom to identify and let go of the things that are holding you back. Pray for His grace to sustain you through the challenges. Seek Support: Share your Lenten goals with a trusted friend, family member, or church group. Having someone to encourage and hold you accountable can make a significant difference. Replace with Positive Practices: When you give up a negative habit, replace it with something positive. For example, if you are giving up gossip, commit to speaking words of kindness and encouragement instead. Reflect and Adjust: Throughout Lent, take time to reflect on your progress. Celebrate your successes and learn from any setbacks. Adjust your goals as needed to stay on track. As we journey through Lent, we remember that our sacrifices are leading us towards the joy of Easter. Jesus' resurrection is the ultimate victory over sin and death, and our Lenten practices help us to participate in that victory. By giving up something bad for Lent, we are not only preparing ourselves for the celebration of Easter, but we are also experiencing a foretaste of the new life that Christ offers us. In conclusion, let this Lenten season be a time of meaningful transformation. Embrace the challenge of giving up something bad, and trust that God will work through your sacrifices to bring about healing, growth, and renewal. May this journey lead you closer to the heart of Jesus and fill you with the hope and joy of His resurrection. As always, I am available in the office 814-833-4062 Tuesday afternoon from 1-3:00 p.m. and Thursday from 9:30 a.m. – 2:00 pm. You can call my cell phone 724-557-2386 anytime (I also text.) Grace and Peace, Pastor Karen

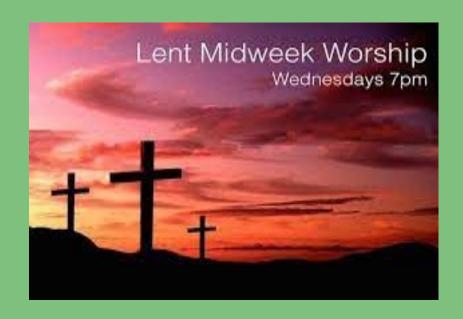


NOON & 7 pm.

Won't you join us?







Join us for Holden
Evening Services on
Wednesday Evenings at 7
pm. We will meet for six
Wednesdays beginning
March 12th.
We would like for you to
join in this special Lenten
Service from March
12th—April 16th.



### LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

For the Lenten season, there will be two Bible Study Classes.

There will be one on Wednesday's beginning March 5th at 6pm. And there will be a Thursday class that meets at 11 am beginning on March 6th.

We would love for you to join us as Pastor Karen brings us through Lent as we study <u>Journeying Through Lent with</u> <u>Luke</u>, authored by Nancy Koester. Books are \$10.00.

Please let Pastor Karen know if you will be able to join one of the classes. ALL are welcome!



### The Social Ministry

Would like to take a moment to extend our heartfelt thank you to everyone who was generous and donated to the

Holy Trinity Soup & Pasta Kitchen during our "Souper Bowl."

We were able to collect \$400!!!! This will help those who are in need of a hot, nutritious meal.

Your generosity continues to bless those in our community! Thank you!!!!!







### Coffee Hour

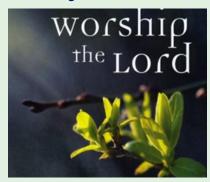
The first Sunday of every month is Coffee Hour following worship.

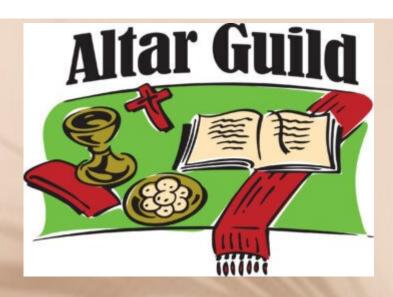
Pop in the lounge after worship to share some laughs and conversation with your Immanuel Family. See you there!





Sunday Worship 9:30 am EVERYONE Welcome! Come join the Immanuel Family!





### HELP WANTED!!!!!

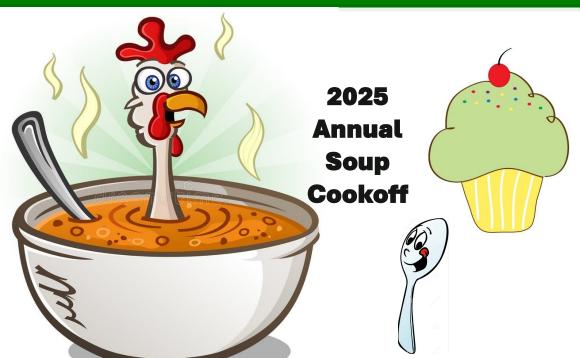
Altar Guild is in need of members. If you can assist either part or full time or even sub we would welcome your help! Training will be provided. This is an easy job and will only require little of your time.

If you would be interested in helping out, Please contact Judy Stewart or any other altar guild person.

We would really appreciate any help that you are able to provide.

As always, we appreciate your help.

~~Altar Guild~~



The annual Soup Cook Off was held on February 9th. 30 people joined in to sample all of the soups. This year we had 9 "souper" cooks presenting their delicious soup choices.

ALL of the soups were flavorful and so tasty! But when the votes were in, Debbie Redditt took the best soup of the year! Debbie made a big pot of yummy chicken cordon bleu soup. Everyone licked their bowls clean!

After indulging on the delicious soups, everyone enjoyed a variety of desserts. Nobody left with an empty belly!

A great big THANK YOU to all of our chefs and our sweet treat bakers! Another successful Soup Off!

# Presenting you this years Soup-Off Winner.... Debbie Redditt



### **Chicken Cordon Bleu Soup**

4 Tbsp. Butter

1 Onion – medium chopped

4 Tbsp. Flour or Cornstarch (use to make gluten free)

64 oz. Chicken Broth

1 Package of Cream Cheese-8oz.

1 lb. Shredded or diced roasted Chicken - or rotisserie chicken

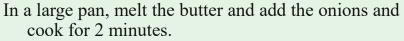
1 lb. Diced Ham (hint: Sugardale sells 1 lb. diced pack)

4 Potatoes (diced & precooked)

1 pint half & half

1 tsp. Dijon mustard

1 lb. Shredded Swiss Cheese or half white cheddar



Add the flour to make a roux and cook for 2 minutes. Add the chicken broth and stir to combine. Cook 3 minutes.

Add the cream cheese and cook until mixture boils, stirring continuously.

Add the chicken, ham and potatoes (precook the potatoes to semi-firm) Cook for 5 minutes

Stir in half & half and Dijon mustard.

Soup should reach 165 degrees. Test potatoes to ensure soft.

Remove from heat and before serving stir in Swiss cheese (hint you can use half Swiss and half White Cheddar.



### **2025 Annual Soup-Off**





















EASTER FLOWERS, I would like to give \_\_\_\_\_ flowers for the Special Offering for Easter Sunday at \$8.50 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. In honor of \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of Given by \_\_\_\_\_ Please indicate your preference below please have circle member deliver to shut in I will deliver to shut in Instead of flowers I would like to give \_\_\_\_\_\_ for the Special Offering for Easter Sunday to go towards Meals-on-Wheels. \$ is enclosed. In honor of In memory of

PLACE FORM & DONATION IN THE OFFERING PLATE OR DROP OFF TO THE OFFICE BEFORE APRIL 14TH.

Given by \_\_\_\_\_



This year we collected:
84 hats; 5 hat & scarf sets; 5 hat & glove sets; 4 winter head bands; 68 pairs of mittens/glove; 50 scarves and 5 pair of socks — for a grand total of 216 items.

These will be donated to Bethesda to help the kiddos in need to stay warm during this brutally cold winter!

**THANK** YOU for your generous donations!







#### Since 1971

4406 Pench Street, State 102 Erie, PA 16509 Office (814) 452-6930 www.MenisCh.WheeleErie.org jencifer@menischwheeleerie.org

John continued wears so much many on few Thanks Duringer

Immanuel Lutheran Church 1002 Powell Avenue Erie, PA 16505

23 January 2025

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent donation of \$289.50 to assist with the Meals on Wheels Erie mission of enabling people to age at home with dignity. We truly appreciate the kindness and support in delivering "more than a meal" to our neighbors most in need in Erie County. Your support will cover meals for an individual for 7 weeks. This is an enormous help to us!

Through special gifts of time, energy, and financial support, we can continue realizing our mission — enabling our seniors to age at home with dignity. Did you know that we deliver more than 200 meals daily and grocery shop at least a dozen times a week for our homebound elderly, Veteran, and permanently disabled neighbors? We couldn't do what we do without gifts like this.

Please know that this donation goes directly to operating our senior and veteran meal programs. With your generosity, our volunteer drivers can deliver a daily meal and compassionate check-in to many homebound, elderly, and disabled in our community.

Thank you again for the thoughtful gift!

Warmest Regards,

Hoffman Executive Director

Jennifer

Donation Giving

Amount: 289.50 Year: December 2024

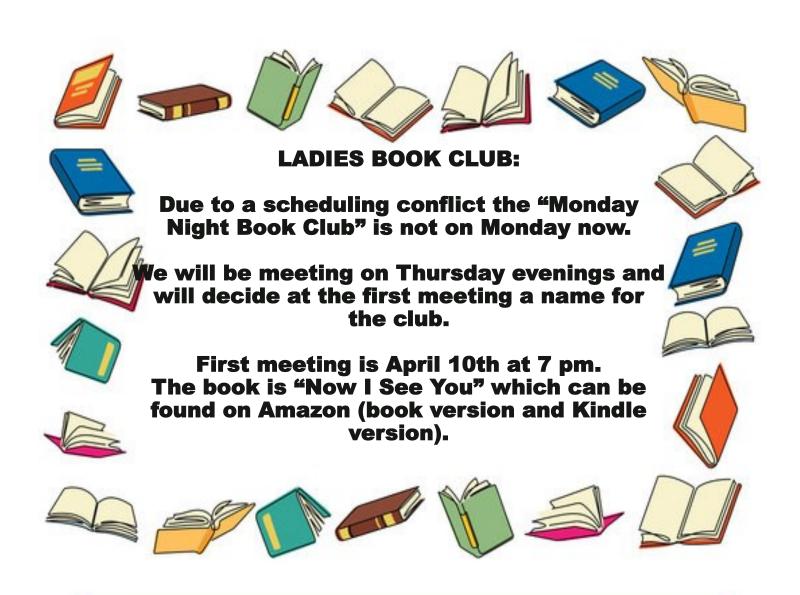
### **Luther Memorial Academy (K-8)**

Will be hosting an open house on Sunday, March 23, 2025 from 1-3 pm.

As Luther Memorial prepares for their 50th Academic Year, this is a great opportunity to visit this amazing and unique school for those who are interested. This is the only ELCA K-8 in the Commonwealth! This is definitely something to be proud of.

For any Erie Conference member family there is a discounted rate for tuition. What a great opportunity to see the school and see if this is a fit for your children or your grandchildren.





### FRIDAY NIGHT GAME NIGHT.....

Don't forget Friday nights we are meeting for game night from 7-9 pm.

We would really like to get some more participation. Let your friends and family know they are welcome to participate in a fun evening of games & laughs.

We would love to see you join in the fun! Come on down and show us your competitive nature!



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 or send them a card. Shut-in list and addresses are on the bulletin board.

Don't forget those who have suffered a loss or are struggling. Take a moment and reach out just to check on them. It only takes a moment to share some kindness and love.



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 PRAYER:**

Vince Belinski—Diane's Nephew Karen Byrd Eric Adkins and family Janice Kreger MaryAnn Long and Russ Long Penney Maloney Denise Arnold The Botwright family Connie Cooper Jim and Lorraine Hornaman Kyle Husted Carol and Gordon Ketchel Patrick Lewis-friend of Sandy Kocur, Sandy's cousin - Scott Farr Sandy's close friend's son-in-law, John Bishop Michael Lozano

Brenda Matson Carole Rickrode

**Bob Roemer** 

Alice Tillotson—Mary Hauser's sister

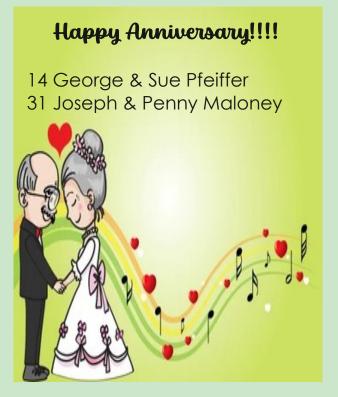
All of our members & friends who are grieving;

Who are in nursing homes; All who are ill at home

We pray for those in the military.

### Maarch Celebrations of Life & Love







### Capital Campaign - Boiler:

Funds for the boiler campaign currently show \$35642.38

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.



Proceeds will be used to build Julia House, Erie's first hospice house and palliative care clinic.

> For further information, contact Karen Adams, 814-315-4245, smada49@verizon.net

How about grabbing a few friends, neighbors or family members and get a team to go bowling for a great cause!!!

This is a great way to spend some quality time having some fun while supporting the construction of Julia Hospice and Palliative Care. A perfect Saturday afternoon activity!!!! What are you waiting for?



Don't forget to change the batteries in your smoke & carbon monoxide detectors when you change your clocks!!!!





### AS LUTHERANS, WHAT ARE WE CALLED TO DO?

"Climate change to obliterate \$1.5 trillion in U.S. home values"

"2024 first year to pass 1.5C global warming limit"

"Countries staying committed to climate plans after US Paris pact exit, UN climate chief says"

Headlines in the news! What does it all mean? Is Climate Change real? Is it a hoax? Why are U.S. policies changing? Are you confused? Frustrated? Scared? There's nothing to be worried about, is there? Is there a Climate Crisis? WHAT IS GOD CALLING US TO DO?

"The foundational creation stories in Genesis 1-2 express God's love for creation and how God commands humans to participate in the creation God declares good."... "God's charge for humans to "have dominion over" and "subdue" the earth (Genesis 1:26, 28) has been woefully misunderstood and misused to justify rapacious economic exploitation, human subjugation, and racist notions of manifest destiny. That interpretation betrays and undermines why God creates and how God acts in the Scriptures. Both the Creator's model of dominion in Genesis and the example of our Lord Jesus. teach us to serve others rather than dominate and degrade them. Created from the earth's dust (Genesis 2:7), human beings are given the responsibility to keep or care for the earth just as God keeps and cares for us (Numbers 6:24-26). The Hebrew word shamar, translated as "keep", means to protect and sustain Earth's life for future generations." Source: "A Social Message on Earth's Climate Crisis" https://resources.elca.org/wp-content/uploads/Earth's Climate Crisis Social Message.pdf Copyright © 2023 Evangelical Lutheran Church in Americans." "For Christians, care of the Earth is not an "environmental cause." Rather, it is central to our holy calling to treasure the Earth and to care for it as our common home, fully integrating creation-care into our love of God and neighbor." Source: "Why Lutherans Care for Creation" 180911WhyLCareForCreation BuildingOnOurFoundations.indd ELCA September 2018

#### WHAT CAN WE DO? Pray - Advocate - Speak Out - Model Our Beliefs in Our Everyday Life

- 52 Ways To Care for Creation 2025 CREATION JUSTICE MINISTRIES
- Devotional resources for use with the Bible and nature Lutherans Restoring Creation
- Sundays and Seasons Care for Creation prayer petitions to use in worship every Sunday.
- "Our Kairos Moment:" An ELCA Climate Care Study Guide Lutherans Restoring Creation

Lord, preserve your people. Maintain righteous government everywhere, so that all things may take place in an orderly way and peace may not be destroyed by revolution or secret enmity, nor the eternal good order be corrupted by debased living or disturbed by other offenses. Amen. Source: Attributed to Martin Luther, modified slightly from <a href="http://www.antiochchurch.ca/famourQuotes.html">http://www.antiochchurch.ca/famourQuotes.html</a>.

The Green Team's purpose is to "raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation." Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

<u>Like and follow us on Facebook: Northwestern PA Synod Green Team – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.</u>
<a href="mailto:nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com">nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com</a>



Ash Wednesday is one of the most popular and important holy days in the liturgical calendar. Ash Wednesday opens Lent, a season of fasting and prayer.

Ash Wednesday takes place 46 days before Easter Sunday, and is chiefly observed by Catholics, although many other Christians observe it too.

Ash Wednesday comes from the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting. The practice includes the wearing of ashes on the head. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. As the priest applies the ashes to a person's forehead, he speaks the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Alternatively, the priest may speak the words, "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

Ashes also symbolize grief, in this case, grief that we have sinned and caused division from God.

Writings from the Second-century Church refer to the wearing of ashes as a sign of penance.

Priests administer ashes during Mass and all are invited to accept the ashes as a visible symbol of penance. Even non-Christians and the excommunicated are welcome to receive the ashes. The ashes are made from blessed palm branches, taken from the previous year's palm Sunday Mass.

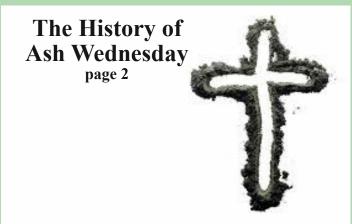
It is important to remember that Ash Wednesday is a day of penitential prayer and fasting. Some faithful take the rest of the day off work and remain home. It is generally inappropriate to dine out, to shop, or to go about in public after receiving the ashes. Feasting is highly inappropriate. Small children, the elderly and sick are exempt from this observance.

It is not required that a person wear the ashes for the rest of the day, and they may be washed off after Mass. However, many people keep the ashes as a reminder until the evening.

Recently, movements have developed that involve pastors distributing ashes to passersby in public places. This isn't considered taboo, but Catholics should know this practice is distinctly Protestant. Catholics should still receive ashes within the context of Mass.

In some cases, ashes may be delivered by a priest or a family member to those who are sick or shut-in.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption.



### Why we receive the ashes

Following the example of the Ninevites, who did penance in sackcloth and ashes, our foreheads are marked with ashes to humble our hearts and reminds us that life passes away on Earth. We remember this when we are told

"Remember, Man is dust, and unto dust you shall return."

Ashes are a symbol of penance made sacramental by the blessing of the Church, and they help us develop a spirit of humility and sacrifice.

The distribution of ashes comes from a ceremony of ages past. Christians who had committed grave faults performed public penance. On Ash Wednesday, the Bishop blessed the hair shirts which they were to wear during the forty days of penance, and sprinkled over them ashes made from the palms from the previous year. Then, while the faithful recited the Seven Penitential Psalms, the penitents were turned out of the church because of their sins — just as Adam, the first man, was turned out of Paradise because of his disobedience. The penitents did not enter the church again until Maundy Thursday after having won reconciliation by the toil of forty days' penance and sacramental absolution. Later, all Christians, whether public or secret penitents, came to receive ashes out of devotion. In earlier times, the distribution of ashes was followed by a penitential procession.

The ashes are made from the blessed palms used in the Palm Sunday celebration of the previous year. The ashes are christened with Holy Water and are scented by exposure to incense. While the ashes symbolize penance and contrition, they are also a reminder that God is gracious and merciful to those who call on Him with repentant hearts. His Divine mercy is of utmost importance during the season of Lent, and the Church calls on us to seek that mercy during the entire Lenten season with reflection, prayer and penance.



Date	Presider	Assistant	Lector	
03/02/25 9:30 AM	Kostur	Anita Byrne	Zach Middaugh	
03/05/25 ASH Wed.	Kostur	<b>Bob Dorler</b>	Bob Dorler	
03/09/25 9:30 AM	Kostur	Bob Dorler	Ron Middaugh	
03/16/25 7:00 PM	Kostur	Debbie Redditt	Bill Redditt	
03/23/25 9:30 AM	Kostur	Bob Dorler	Bob Dorler	
03/30/25 9:30 AM	Kostur	Bob Dorler	Bob Dorler	

## 



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Quarter Sunday Coffee Hour	Quilters 9:30 am Flagship Choir 7 pm	7 AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Tops 9:00 am Ash Wed Service 12 pm & 7 pm Bible Study 6 pm AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	9 Bible Study 11 am Choir 12 pm	AA 7:00 Game Night 7 pm	11
9 Council Meeting	13 Quilters 9:30 am Flagship Choir 7 pm	14 AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Tops 9:00 am Bible Study 6 pm Holden Evening Service 7 pm AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Bible Study 11 am Choir 12 pm	AA 7:00 pm Game Night 7 pm	18
16	20 Quilters 9:30 am Flagship Choir 7 pm	21 AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Tops 9 am Bible Study 6 pm Holden Evening Service 7 pm AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Bible Study 11 am Choir 12 pm	AA 7:00 pm Game Night 7 pm	22
23	Quilters 9:30 am Flagship Choir 7 pm	28 AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	Tops 9 am Bible Study 6 pm Holden Evening Service 7 pm AA Mtg. 7:30 pm	30 Bible Study 11 am Choir 12 pm	AA 7 pm Game Night 7 pm	
30	31 Quilters 9:30 am Flagship Choir 7 pm					



**Immanuel** Church Office 814-833-4062

Office Hours 8:30—12:30 Monday—Thursday

### **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month



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/

#### Staff

Pastor Karen Kostur 814-833-4062 or Emergency #: 724-557-2386 Pastor's Office Hours – Tuesday 1:00-2:00 Thursday, 9:00am-2:00pm

Church Caretaker: Wally Coughlin Organist/Music Director: Allan Sloven-

kay

Admin. Ofc.: Brenda Matson

**Sunday School** 

Coord: Anita Byrne & Janice Kreger Teachers: Anita Byrne & Pastor Kostur

### WATCH FOR US ON FACEBOOK, GOERIE.COM, ERIE NEWS NOW AND IN PRINT IN THE **ERIE TIMES NEWS**

Fellowship, Outreach & Growth
Council liaisons: Sally Leubin
COFFEE HOUR 1<sup>ST</sup> SUNDAY OF THE MONTH ONGOING COLLECTION FOR LITTLE FREE PANTRY SOUP COOK BOOKLET AVAILABLE

**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

<u>Social Ministry Committee</u> Committee chair: Debbie Madurski Council Liaison: Brenda Durst

**Worship & Music** Liaison to Worship: Joe Byrne

**Christian Education** 

Council liaison: Mary Hauser



#### 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