

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

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Immanuel Lutheran Church of Osman
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
Reverend Jeffrey McPike, BCC

January/February 2023



From Pastor McPike's Desk...

Last year, in eight editions, various aspects of the history of the LCMS have been presented in this part of the Osman Newsletter. This being the beginning of the year after the celebration of the Synod's 175th Anniversary, we are coming around to the end of this series. Yet, there remain a few important aspects of the events of the church that wait to be told.

As any organization ages, views on aspects of life can also change. There tends to be a drift that follows popular movements. Churches are no exception. Consider on a practical level how many people at Osman dress for church very formally today – maybe on Christmas and Easter, but that is about it. One hundred years ago, woman would be expected to wear dresses, men would be expected to wear a coat, shirt and tie, with no exceptions.

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod is no exception to this rule. Various winds of change in theology have blown the church to and fro over the last 175 years, but nothing was as remarkable as the “storm” known today as *Seminex*. “SEMINEX” is a made-up word derived from “Concordia SEMinary IN Exile, but where did that name come from?”

When I teach adult Catechism class, the very first question I ask as a way to starting into the material is “Where does the church get its teachings?” Christians would answer this question, “From the Bible!” However, if that is true, then why are there so many different denominations who all read the same Bible? The answer is pretty basic... they do not all read the Bible the same way.

One of the three major principles of the Lutheran Reformation is *Sola Scriptura* – the BIBLE ALONE. The traditional meaning of that is “the Bible must interpret itself.” Put another way, nothing can stand in judgment of what is written in the Bible. Lutherans over the years have typically done this by considering that the Bible contains no errors (inerrancy). The key teaching in the Bible is **Justification by Grace through faith** – that we are forgiven our sins and made acceptable to God for the sake of the work of Christ alone. Reading the Bible must be understood through that teaching. Along with that, the books of the Bible were written under the *inspiration* of the Holy Spirit. Basically, the Holy Spirit guided Moses to write the books under his name, Matthew the first Gospel, St. Paul the various epistles credited to him and so forth. The understanding of every passage in the Bible MUST conform to those basics.

In the middle part of the 20th Century, a new way of reading the Bible, called “Historical Criticism”, began to gain popularity, particularly in Germany. Historical Criticism calls into question some of the traditionally held ways of looking at passages and stories from the Bible. The authorship of the various Biblical books was called into question. Questions developed around some of the more “supernatural” reports (the flood and Noah’s Ark, Jonah in the whale, three men in the fiery furnace, even the story of a seven day creation and so forth). Later, even the miracles of Jesus were called into question. The method basically came down to this: The Bible started as several verbal traditions, where people told and re-told stories over time throughout the history of the Old Testament. Approximately two hundred or so years before Jesus, a few people sat down and wrote all these things down, attempting to synthesize the various stories into a single narrative. However, it is up to Christians to figure out what came from God and what was simply added later.

This is a very long explanation. The reason is coming. Various professors called to *Concordia Seminary*, St Louis, began to be interested in this new way of reading the Bible. This was true through the 1950s. At the 1962 convention of the LCMS at Cleveland, resolutions were put forth to “investigate” the “new teaching” at the seminary. Additionally, the synod was in a bit of a change itself, as “the old man”, as he was fondly referred to in his term as president of Synod, Rev. John W. Behnken, retired after serving the Synod as the sixth president (1935-1962). As with any change in long-term leadership, the Synod was in a bit of flux. The “investigation” called for by the 1962 convention revealed issues at the St. Louis seminary but nothing substantial was done to address them. The seminary kept calling professors who taught this “new” method of Biblical interpretation. Furthermore, a president who was sympathetic to this teaching, Dr. John Tietjen, was elected in 1969. Dr. Tietjen strongly supported this new method of Biblical interpretation and continued encouraging the calling of professors of that same thinking.

About that same time, the Synod in convention elected Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus II, upsetting the incumbent, Oliver Harms. This was new in Synodical politics. Before this, synod presidents served until they did not want to any longer before a new one was elected as his replacement. Harms ended up being blamed for the “liberals” running amok at the St. Louis seminary.

Dr. Preus ran on a platform of “cleaning up” the “mess” at the seminary. In 1973, Preus was authorized by the convention to take the necessary action to deal with the issues at the seminary. In 1974, Preus “suspended” (fired?) Tietjen. This incited a strong reaction, as nearly all faculty and student body “walked off” the campus. The seminary was a shadow of its former self, faculty reduced to five and students reduced to 25. Those who left referred to themselves as “**Concordia Seminary-in-Exile**”, or SEMINEX for short. Classes for Seminex continued on the campus of Eden seminary in downtown St. Louis. The program was later transferred to Chicago and was first known as “Christ Seminary-Seminex” at that city on the campus of the Lutheran School of Theology. Approximately 1,100 LCMS congregations and pastors sympathetic to Tietjen and in agreement with this teaching also left the LCMS, and they, along with the 45 or so professors from the St. Louis Seminary, formed the *American Evangelical Lutheran Church (AELC)*. Tietjen and the AELC were instrumental in holding talks with other Lutheran bodies, primarily the *American Lutheran Church (ALC)* and the *Lutheran Church in America (LCA)*, resulting in the formation of the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)* in 1987.

At the start of this was the question, “do we need two seminaries” since it is becoming apparent that the LCMS no longer has enough students to fill even one. The answer is... for the sake of the church, yes. The Springfield seminary faculty helped balance the tide of the changes happening at St. Louis during those years and kept the church on track.

Next Month: What happened to German?

Quilting Dates

The ladies quilted on January 2nd and January 4th in the fellowship hall. Six women completed 14 quilts. The ladies will be quilting on February 6th at 8 AM and February 8th at 12:30 PM. The quilts will be given to Lutheran World Relief and Orphan Grain Train in the fall. All ladies of the congregation are invited, and no experience is needed!

Altar Flowers

Please sign-up on the bulletin board if you would like to donate altar flowers in memory of a special person or occasion or pay for the eternal flame candle for a specific month. There is also an Altar Guild sign-up if you would like to help prepare the altar for Sunday morning services. Please know that your assistance will be very much appreciated!

Hat, Mitten, and Glove Donations

At the November Ladies Aid/LWML Meeting, the ladies voted to donate hats, mittens, and gloves instead of having a Christmas gift exchange. This project was also offered to the congregation. The collection box on the back pew overflowed with donations. There were 24 pairs of mittens and gloves, 17 hats, and 9 scarves donated. These items were donated to Salt Creek Resource Center in Farmer City which provides clothing to the needy.

Christmas Thank Yous

Thank you very much to all the members who helped decorate and undecorate the church and the church property for the Christmas season. Thank you to Lee Whitehouse for getting the tree for the church. Thank you to the Sunday School children for decorating the tree in the fellowship hall.

Thank you to those members who donated a poinsettia to adorn the altar during the Christmas Season. Those donating were Kim Clemmons, Brenda Hendricks, Debbie and John Lammle, Larry Lutz, Jane and Jim Poppe, Sue and Jim Van Wakeman, Connie and Don Warsaw, and Sandy and Lee Whitehouse. Since the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services were cancelled due to weather, the poinsettias were used for the January 1st and 8th worship services.



Thank you to the members who packed the Christmas treat bags that were distributed on January 1st. Those helping from left to right front row - Annette Warsaw, Addi Warsaw, James Amdor, Connie Warsaw, and Diana Zimmerman and left to right back row – Jeff Warsaw, Dwight Hooker, Don Warsaw, and Bob Zimmerman.

Ladies Aid/LWML Meeting

Ladies Aid/LWML will meet on Thursday, February 9th, at 1:30 PM in the fellowship hall. Marsha Warsaw will have topic, and Brenda Hendricks and Wilma Grussing will be the hostesses. There are several business items on the agenda which includes Ash Wednesday social hour, serving the Champaign Zone pastors in March and hosting the Danville Zone Spring Fling in March. All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend.

Newly Installed Church Officers

The newly elected church officers were installed in the worship service on Sunday, February 5th. The following officers were installed: elders - Steve Martin and Bob Zimmerman, secretary - Sandy Whitehouse, trustee - Lee Whitehouse, assistant finance secretary - Susan Martin. **Thanks** to the outgoing church council officers – Dwight Hooker, Chase Zimmerman, and Barb Whitehouse-Gercken for dedicating their time and energies to the work of the church. The present council consists of the following members:

Chairman – Rick Hardesty

Secretary – Sandy Whitehouse

Treasurer – Terri Hooker

Elders – Steve Martin, Jim Van Wakeman, Don Warsaw, and Bob Zimmerman

Trustees – John Grussing and Lee Whitehouse

Finance Secretary – Brenda Hendricks

Assistant Finance Secretary – Susan Martin

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 15th, at 6:30 in the fellowship hall.

Lenten Season

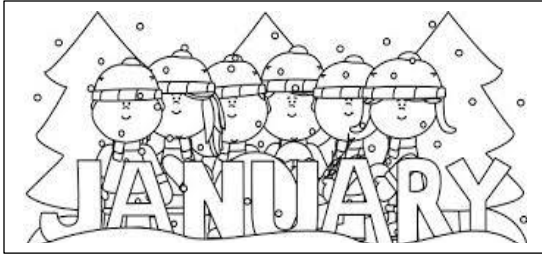
The Lenten Season will be upon us soon. We will observe Ash Wednesday on February 22 with a 7 PM worship service. There will either be a social hour after the service or a soup supper meal before the service. The Ladies Aid/LWML members will decide that at their February meeting so watch the bulletin for more details There will not be mid-week Lenten services, but there will be Holy Week services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Thrivent Members!

If you have any Thrivent Choice Dollars which are given upon ownership of certain Thrivent products, do not forget to donate those to one of the 35,000 churches and nonprofits that Thrivent recognizes. Immanuel Lutheran Church of Osman is one of those choices. The deadline to donate 2022 choice dollars is March 31st. The amount contributed to our church in the last year has decreased greatly so if you have Thrivent Choice Dollars, but do not know how to donate them, please see Brenda Hendricks or Terri Hooker.

Shut – In Visits

All members can volunteer to visit our members who cannot get out to worship with us. There is a sign-up sheet on the back bulletin board of the church if you are interested in “bringing some smiles” to people who have health issues and cannot get to church.

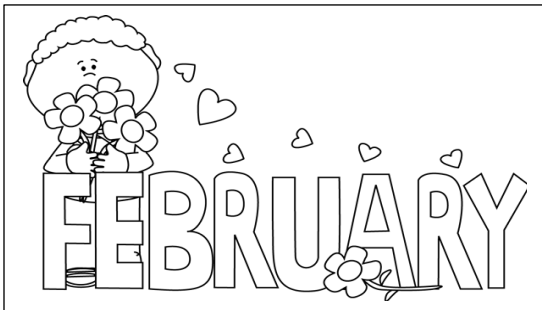


January Birthdays

Joey Haggin.....01-02
 Sara Kunde..... 01-05
 Brad Lutz..... 01-10
 Anne Amdor..... 01-18
 Hannah Duncan.....01-19
 Megan Bidner..... 01-21
 Bryce Martin..... 01-23

January Anniversaries

Christie and Leonard Delaney.....01-07-1995



February Birthdays

Bryan Edwards.....02-03
 David Peyton.....02-03
 Theresa Van Wakeman Wilson.....02-07
 Austin Miller.....02-09
 Christie Delaney.....02-10
 Jenna Mangold.....02-14
 Neil Bidner.....02-17
 Jeff Warsaw.....02-19
 Reese Gallier.....02-26

February Anniversaries

Susan and Austin Miller...02-12-1977

Sara and David Kunde...02-14-2012

Sandy and Lee Whitehouse...02-28-2015

Statistics

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Worship Service</u> | <u>Bible Class</u> | <u>Sunday School</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| November 27 | 50 | 12 | 2 |
| December 4 | 45 | 10 | 3 |
| December 11 | 30 | 8 | 0 |
| December 18 | 41 | 7 | 2 |
| December 24 | cancelled | | |
| December 25 | cancelled | | |

| | | | |
|------------|----|----|---|
| January 1 | 43 | 10 | 0 |
| January 8 | 44 | 12 | 3 |
| January 15 | 50 | 10 | 3 |
| January 22 | 24 | 10 | 2 |
| January 29 | 44 | 13 | 2 |

What Valentine Can I Give Him?

What can I give to Jesus
 On this special Valentine's Day?
 How can I tell Him I'll love Him,
 And follow Him, come what may?

How can I show I need Him?
 Should I send a red heart, with lace?
 How can I thank Him enough
 For his sacrifice, love and grace?

What Valentine can I give Him,
 My adoration to impart?
 I'll give to Him what He wants most;
 I'll yield to Him my heart.

By Joanna Fuchs