

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

942 Grape Avenue, Fisher, IL 61843-8512



Immanuel Lutheran Church of Osman

The Lutheran Church – Missouri
Synod

Reverend Jeffrey McPike, BCC

September 2025



From Pastor McPike's Desk.....

In July, I attended a continuing education seminar at Concordia Seminary titled “Dying Well in Christ.” That inspired the August article in this column where I expressed concern for the common nomenclature used to avoid the word “death” and nearly every word related to it. To indicate to you how pervasive this trend has become, I offer in evidence an incident regarding my father’s obituary. When my father died near the end of July, I submitted to the funeral home a very carefully crafted obituary that I had been working on for a very long time. I chose the words carefully and deliberately. I wanted the obituary to confess the faith we have in Christ, and so I included some common phrases from our liturgy and worship to do so. The obituary began: “David McPike, 93, died on July 25, 2025...” When I looked up his obituary on the funeral home website, *their* version modified my wording to say “David McPike, formerly of Martinsville, passed away on July 25, 2025...” I was livid. I wrote a strong EMAIL to the funeral home questioning the change. The funeral director replied by changing back to my original wording. I replied then, apologizing for my terse and unkind remarks and asked his forgiveness. All is well. He, however, unwittingly provided the absolutely perfect illustration of the point made in the August newsletter. Even the death industry does not like to talk about death.

As stated last month, we fear death. There is a dread of death. Pharaohs were entombed with a supply of grain and other dry goods hoping for resurrection or “reincarnation” to allow them to survive until they were discovered alive. Legend tells of Ponce de Leon, searching in vain for the *Fountain of Youth* in 1513 in what is today Florida. Modern medicine has successfully allowed for the elongation of life so that folks living into their 90s are becoming more common. This has led most businesses to provide only funding for retirement, while getting out of the business of traditional pensions, which formerly promised retirement income until death. AAL/Thrivent sold a long-term care policy to my father back in 2000 that has since been discontinued. Quite simply, people like my folks broke the bank! The answer of modern healthcare to the fear of death is to provide a plethora of interventions that stand in the way of death, causing consternation to decision makers around the question, “just how far do we go?”

The fear of death has also invaded the funeral industry and changed how we deal with death when it does come. Folks, it seems, increasingly abhor the word “funeral.” Preferred today is “celebration of life.” More and more, funerals are gatherings of remembrance of the life lived, inviting numerous speakers to share memories and stories about the person who has died. The focus is on what was before death, avoiding as much as possible the reality of the death that has now occurred.

I will be the first to say that funerals are NO FUN. I did rather well at my father's funeral last month until the final hymn, "For All the Saints, Who From Their Labors Rest." I was sad throughout, but when the words of the sixth stanza came I was brought to my knees:

**But then there breaks, a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant rise in bright array.
The King of Glory passes on His way. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

I sang until then, but I lost it. I stopped singing and started sobbing. In those words, I could see my dad among "the saints triumphant" rising in "bright array." I sobbed to Sharon, "I just can't do this..." (My family gave me a hard time later, saying they were okay until I did that, and they all started sobbing as well!)

"Celebration of Life" gatherings that have risen in popularity in our day seek to avoid that level of grief and mourning. A significant consequence, however, is that it also avoids a very wonderful confession of faith. Yes, I cried when I saw, in my mind's eye, my father with my mother, and other dear relatives of mine who are part of that great "host arrayed in white like thousand snow-clad mountains bright" (LSB 676). I miss my dad! He and I had many things in common, including Amateur Radio, building things, traveling Europe and good German Bier! He was actually the one who started me leading tours to Germany, and of the four I have led, he was my travel companion for three.

Funerals are confessions of faith. Are they sad? Yes. Do we enjoy them? No. A well done funeral, however, is a confession of faith. The opening hymn at my father's funeral: "I Know that My Redeemer Lives" confessed dad's and our faith in our Risen Lord. The sermon hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God" reminded us that dad stood from the time of his 1953 catechesis and baptism in the confession of faith in Christ according to the Lutheran Church. The hymn after the sermon, "At the Lamb's High Feast" confessed our faith in Christ through table fellowship, as dad throughout his life and shortly before he died took bread and body and wine and blood for the forgiveness of his sins, strength for his faith, and fellowship with other Christians. That hymn was the suggestion of my brother, particularly for the stanza **"Now, no more can death appall. Now no more the grave enthrall. You have opened paradise, and to you the saints shall rise. Alleluia!"** The closing hymn confessed our Christian Hope that as Jesus lives, all those who die shall live as saints with Angels and with archangels and with all the company of heaven, as we sang, "For All the Saints, Who From their labors rest." You read, above, about the impact of stanza six of that hymn on me.

Funerals are confessions of faith. The hymns, the liturgy, the readings, the sermon, the prayers. In these, we Christians confess our faith to the world as in the words of St. Paul, "we want you to know the truth about those who have died, so that you will not be sad, as are those who have no hope." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

I occasionally am asked, "isn't it hard to do a funeral for someone you did not know?" My answer is always, "No". I may have not known the person who died, but we both know the Savior who lives, loving us so much that He died and rose again, and because of that, I preach Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1:23). I can assure those left behind of the certainty of that person's presence before God in heaven forever.

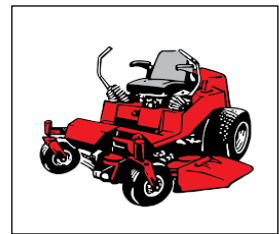
Funerals are confessions of faith. The funeral pall confesses that the person who died, though sinful, was considered perfect, covered with Christ's righteousness, connected by baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ. The placement of the casket in the aisle as before God's altar reminds of the person's worship, as they came to receive the gifts of God through word and sacrament. The paschal candle, customarily burning from the first announcement of resurrection on Easter morning through the announcement of Christ's ascension to symbolize the presence of the risen Christ with His disciples, reminds of the presence of the risen Christ in the person who died.

Funerals are confessions of faith. They are **truly celebrations of life** as they primarily celebrate the life of Christ. In a world where less emphasis is placed on faith in Christ and the Christian Church, it is little wonder that so many euphemistic phrases have grown to avoid the word "death", and how "celebration of life" as in celebrating the life that was has become more in vogue than funerals.

**Jesus Lives! The victory's won, death no longer can appall me.
Jesus Lives! Death's reign is done! From the grave Christ will recall me!
Brighter scenes will then commence. This shall be my confidence! (LSB 490)**

Possible September Lawn Mowers

The week of August 31 – September 6 – Jerry Edwards
The week of September 7 - 13 – Neil Bidner
The week of September 14 – 20 – Bryan Warsaw
The week of September 21 – 27 – John Grussing
The week of September 28 – October 4 – Shaun Zimmerman



The schedule this year lists the week that the volunteer needs to mow. It is recommended to mow on Thursday through Saturday of that week so it looks nice for Sunday. If you have misplaced your schedule which was in the March newsletter, there is one on the back bulletin board. If you have any questions, contact trustee Jeff Warsaw or John Grussing.

Ladies Aid/LWML Meeting

Ladies Aid/LWML ladies will meet on Thursday, September 11th at 7 PM in the fellowship hall. Debbie Lammle will be giving the topic, and Wilma Grussing and Diana Zimmerman will be the hostesses. Roll call will be answered by a Bible verse on harvest. All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend.

Quilting

The ladies will be tying quilts on Monday, September 15th, at 12:30 PM and on Wednesday, September 17th, at 8:00 AM in the fellowship hall. The dates are later in the month due to the Labor Day Weekend and other events the second week of September. All ladies of the congregation are invited to tie knots. The group has made over 70 quilts since last October when the last collection day was held. This will be the last month to add to the total as the count starts over on the quilting dates in November. The quilts will be taken to collection locations for Orphan Grain Train and Lutheran World Relief in October.

Operation Christmas Child

We will be packing shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child in November for children in poor countries across the world. We still need 8 glue sticks, 7 pencil sharpeners, 58 pencils, 11 boxes of colored pencils, 8 wash cloths, 12 nail clippers, and 23 individual packages of Kleenex. We usually pack 12 boxes for boys and 12 boxes for girls so other small items can be added such as matchbox cars, bracelets, small hair bows or clips, etc. If you prefer to give a cash donation, we would be glad to buy items that are needed. There is a collection box on the back pew. Two Thrivent Action Team cards will be used to buy larger items and to pay the \$10 postage fee (maybe more) for each box. If you would like to pack a box or have questions about what is acceptable, please see Terri Hooker or Connie Warsaw. Thanks so much for your donations.

Upcoming Soup Supper Benefit

The Stewardship Committee will be sponsoring a benefit soup supper in November. If you have any ideas for a worthy recipient, please contact Dwight and Terri Hooker or Brenda Hendricks.

Wiener Roast/Hayride



Save the date! Our church will have an evening worship service before the wiener roast and hayrack ride on Saturday, September 20th. The service will be a hymn sing led by Jerry Niemann and Alicia Haggin. (There will not be a Sunday worship service.) It will start at 4:00 followed by the hayride and wiener roast. The wieners, buns, and drinks will be provided. Every guest is asked to bring a dish to share and their own table service. There is a sign-up sheet on the back bulletin board so groceries can be bought to fit the number planning to attend.

Bring a Friend to Church Sunday



"Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday was held on August 3rd during the regular worship service. The guests were a wide variety of relatives and friends. After the service several members and guests helped celebrate the day with a social hour in the fellowship hall where coffee cakes, doughnuts, and drinks were enjoyed. Thank you to the those who baked the refreshments and those that helped serve and clean up.

Summary of the July Council Meeting

Eleven elected church officers attended the meeting on July 23. Pastor McPike began the July Council Meeting with an opening prayer. The secretary, Debbie Lammle, continued by reading the minutes from the June council meeting. A motion was made and passed to accept the minutes. Treasurer, Terri Hooker, gave her report with a total income of \$6,801.00, total expenses of \$10,693.91, and balance as of June 30th as \$47,187.73. A motion was made and passed to accept the treasurer's report.

Pastor reported that he would be gone on September 21st, and Jerry Niemann has agreed to lead the worship with a hymn sing. The council is considering having the worship service on Saturday, September 20th while at the wiener roast. He also reported that a new confirmation curriculum from Concordia is being used this fall and that the confirmands are eager to begin acolyting.

Jeff Warsaw, trustee, reported that JC Heating and Cooling is coming again to check on the air conditioning in the church. He also reported that a new leaf blower has been purchased for the church which is battery operated. Jeff also indicated he would check on furnace filters designated to remove mold.

Thanks was given to Don and Connie Warsaw, Jeff Warsaw, and Brenda Hendricks for taking the poles near the railroad down. Chairman Lammle also thanked Don and Connie Warsaw for installing the new changeable church sign west of the church. Chairman Lammle has the other roadside church sign ready to replace on Route 54 between Weedman and Route #136.

In old business it was reported that the Mission Outreach Committee is reviewing responses from the surveys that were sent out months ago and will be giving direction to the church council and Pastor soon. The length of the next several council meetings will be increased for discussion of these responses.

In new business Jerry Niemann informed the council concerning changing the insurance. The two companies that are being compared are Church Mutual vs. Brotherhood Mutual. A motion was made and accepted to get a second quote from Church Mutual Insurance. The Lloyd Power farm sale was discussed. Details such as the menu, the food donations from the members of the congregation, and the work required for set up and sale were outlined. A list of items that would be borrowed from the church was submitted. Two \$250 Thrivent cards have been received to help cover the cost of items not donated for the sale. Jeff Warsaw presented examples of logos and sayings for the back of T-shirts that Annette Warsaw designed. Annette Warsaw attended the meeting to give more details. Council members marked their first choice. A sign-up for ordering T-shirts and dry fit collared shirts will be presented at the Quarterly Voters Meeting. This will allow everyone attending and working at future church activities to market our church.

The next two activities, the Bring a Friend to Church Sunday and the church picnic, were discussed with duties assigned to council members.

A motion was made to run a water line to the new refrigerator so the ice maker would work. Motion carried. Dwight Hooker volunteered to pay for the supplies and the labor. Don Warsaw suggested using memorial money to pay for the cost of the new refrigerator. Terri Hooker will contact families with memorial money left in the treasury to get permission to use their family money. Meeting was adjourned.

Church Picnic



On the right –
Joey and
Michael Haggin
play some water
games.

On the left –
Bella Ford uses
two foam
noodles to keep a
balloon aloft.



The church picnic was held on Sunday, August 17th, at the church fellowship hall. After the worship service 42 members and guests walked to the hall for a bounteous potluck. Added to the usual dishes, Eric Henriksen grilled moose burgers and Dwight and Terri Hooker added a homemade ice cream sundae bar. After the meal a few rounds of Family Feud were played by the adults, and the children enjoyed games indoors and outdoors. Because of the hot temperatures the water balloons and water guns were a big hit.

Church Council Meeting

The church council will meet on Wednesday, September 17th at 6:30 PM in the hall.

Ladies Aid Luncheon

Fourteen Ladies Aid/LWML members and guests enjoyed a great luncheon meal at Murdock's Restaurant in Loda, on Thursday, August 14th. After prayer and introductions, a short meeting was held about the upcoming rally and the duties that will need to be performed as the hosting church. The group also had the privilege to be served by the friendly face of Sarah (Martin) Ford. Thanks to the committee of Debbie Lammle and Debbie Martin for making the arrangements and for the nice treat bags.

Sunday School and Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes will be starting after Labor Day in the fellowship hall from 8:30 to 9:30 each Sunday morning. The Sunday School classes are being held in the church annex each Sunday at the same times. Please be quiet if you need to enter these areas during these times.

Summary of the July Quarterly Congregational Meeting

The Immanuel Lutheran Church of Osman Voters Meeting was called to order on July 27th by John Lammle, Church Chairman. Pastor McPike opened the meeting with prayer. Chairman Lammle asked if any member at least 18 years of age would like to sign the church constitution. Secretary Debbie Lammle read the minutes of the last voters meeting from April 27, 2025. Minutes were approved as read. Treasurer, Terri Hooker, read the treasurer's report with a balance of \$52,451.66. Report was approved as read.

Pastor McPike thanked the congregation for the opportunity to serve here at Immanuel Osman. He will not be in attendance for the 3rd and 4th Sundays in October. Pastor and his wife will be in Germany during the last two Sundays in October.

In old business Chairman Lammle thanked everyone who responded to the survey sent out by the Mission Outreach Committee. The responses are being summarized by the committee and will soon be reviewing and giving direction to the Church Council and Pastor McPike. The dehumidifier recently installed on the furnace has been doing a sufficient job of keeping the humidity in the church within the recommended range of 30-50%. The trustees' plan is to continue to monitor the humidity level through the balance of the year and then proceed with the mold removal after the first of the year. Chairman Lammle thanked all those who helped with the Confirmation Sunday reception, Bellflower 4th of July, those removing the railroad poles, Don and Connie Warsaw for upgrading the lighted church sign, and Brenda Hendricks for attending the CID Convention.

In new business future church activities were announced. These were "Bring a Friend to Church" Sunday on August 3rd, annual church picnic on August 17th, Lloyd Power's Sale on August 27th with a food stand put on by our congregation, Fall Festival on September 20th. Pastor Appreciation/German fest will be held in November but date not set. Brenda Hendricks then presented a report on the CID Convention she attended in July. Annette Warsaw presented 2 different colored shirts, one a t-shirt and one a polo shirt with a collar. Members were given the opportunity to sign up to purchase them after the meeting.

Meeting ended with the Lord's prayer.

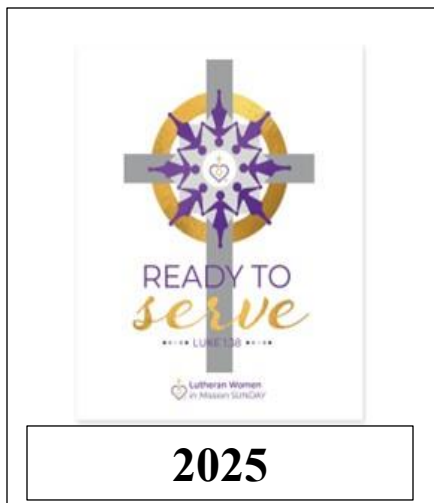
Lloyd Power Sale

The church was asked to serve the Lloyd Power Farm Machinery Sale in rural Bellflower, which was to be held on Wednesday, August 27th. However, the sale has been postponed until November 19th. At the regular council meeting on Wednesday, August 20th, the council discussed if our church still wanted to serve the sale. Because of the busy schedule in November for both farmers and women preparing several meals in November the council voted to not serve it.

Danville Zone LWML Rally

Immanuel Osman will be hosting the LWML Rally on Tuesday, September 9th from 8AM until 1 PM. The breakfast will be held in the hall with the rally to follow in the church with a speaker and a business meeting. The theme is "Precious in His Eyes". Cheryl Long, CID President will give an update on mission grants and upcoming events in the CID. Kristen Freeman from the LCMS Office of National Missions will be the speaker.

LWML Sunday



Our congregation will celebrate LWML Sunday on October 5th. This year's LWML Sunday theme is "GO". This year's theme begins a four-year cycle focusing on the LWML Mission Statement — As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others. For Lutheran Women in Mission Sunday 2025 we focus on Proclaiming Christ. The Ascension text of "GO" (Luke 24:44–53) is the mission emphasis for Lutheran Women in Mission Sunday 2025. On Ascension Day, Jesus gave his followers an assignment "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations."

Summary of the August Council Meeting

The August meeting of the Immanuel Lutheran Church Council was held on August 20, 2025, with ten members present. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, John Lammle, followed by the reading of the minutes. They were approved. Terri Hooker gave the treasurer's report. She explained that a leaf blower and a new refrigerator were purchased with memorial funds from Susan Warsaw, C.J. Warsaw, and Cindy Masko accounts. The new Christmas tree was purchased with Myron Zimmerman and Jeri Bidner memorials. Garland for the tree will be purchased at a later date. Dedication for these items will be forthcoming. The total July income was reported as \$ 9,093.00; total July expenses were \$8,695.64; and the total checking account as of July 31 is \$48,837.83. Treasurer's report was approved.

Chairman Lammle raised the concern that the dehumidifier purchased from JC Cooling and Heating for the church is not controlling the humidity to the recommended level to prevent mold from growing. The question brought to the attention of the council is "did JC provide the correct size dehumidifier?" Chairman Lammle was concerned that we should not pay for mold removal again if we cannot control the humidity level. Jeff Warsaw will check with JC's to see what they advise.

Chairman Lammle advised the council that Pastor McPike suggested an outside professional to evaluate the church's sound system. The trustees were unsure who to contact as a possible source. Jerry Niemann informed the council of a possible family connection for used video equipment to record our church service. We will discuss with Pastor before proceeding.

Jerry Niemann met with both insurance companies and will give a report about his findings next meeting. Don Warsaw informed the council that the Lloyd Power Sale has been postponed until November. After some discussion a motion was made to not serve this sale at the rescheduled date. Motion passed. Jerry Niemann then passed out all the responses from the Mission Outreach questionnaire. Jerry asked the council to read over each entrée. The committee will meet with the council during the next council meeting and spend time discussing each concern.

Chairman Lammle thanked everyone who helped with the church picnic on the previous Sunday, especially Brenda Hendricks for the decorations and games, and Dwight and Terri Hooker for the homemade ice cream, and Eric Henriksen for grilling moose burgers.

Summary of the August Council Meeting – Continued

The discussion then turned to the Church Fall Festival scheduled for September 20th. The fall festival will begin at 4pm, with a hymn sing led by Jerry Niemann, followed by a hayrack ride and a potluck meal with grilled hot dogs. A homemade ice cream contest, and a youth cookie decorating contest will also be included in the evening. We will advertise this event on the sign west of the church, posters, and the elders will call everyone on the “inclement weather list” a week before the event. Chairman Lammle received permission to use the Missouri synod Lutheran logo on the church shirts that Annette Warsaw designed. Sunday, August 24th, will be the last Sunday to order shirts, paid by the members. Chairman Lammle passed out information concerning a Mahomet Fall Festival on October 4th. Council members discussed ways to advertise our church at this event. Meeting was adjourned.



September 6 – Jim Poppe
September 7 - Mark Barrack
September 12 - Ken Whitehouse
September 14 – Jerry Niemann
September 15 – Georgette Pauling
September 15 – Declan Lammle
September 21 - Ryan Peyton
September 23 - Mitchell Gallier
September 24 - Rob Gallier
September 24 - Sara McPike
September 26 - Scott Gercken
September 29 - Nicholas Haggin

Statistics

Date	Worship Service	Bible Class	Sunday School
July 27	35	14	1
August 3	51	14	3
August 10	37	14	2
August 17	46	No Class	No Class
August 24	41	14	1

Anniversaries

Kris and Shaun Zimmerman 9-2-2011

Melanie and Jerry Niemann 9-4-1970

Sandy and Ryan Lammle 9-5-2014

Sue and Jim VanWakeman 9-13-1969

Our Deepest Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of David McPike, father of Pastor McPike, who died on July 25th at the age of 93. May God provide comfort and care for those who mourn his loss. His funeral was held at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Martinsville, Indiana on Wednesday, July 30th.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of Marlyn Ehlers, wife of Pastor Don Ehlers, who died on August 3rd at the age of 92. May God provide comfort and cares for those who mourn her loss. Her funeral was held at St. John Lutheran Church in Champaign on August 11th.