

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

942 Grape Avenue, Fisher, IL 61843-8512



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

April 2026



From Pastor McPike's Desk....

The Great Vigil of Easter

We are familiar with "Eves"... not our first parent Eve, but Eve as EVening. . . or the evening before a particular holiday. Some of the more common ones are obviously "Christmas Eve", "New Year's Eve", and who can forget... "All Hallows Eve"... a.k.a., Halloween. One very important "Eve" in the life of the church is the "Eve" of Easter. This night has been celebrated since the early Middle Ages with much pageantry as "The Great Vigil of Easter."

A "vigil" is a time when folks sit up, usually in the late hours of the night to early hours of the morning, anticipating something important. The medieval observations of the Easter Vigil would begin around midnight on Easter Sunday morning - the first moment that the day could be called Easter according to the clock. Easter was the most important festival in the church year, leading the church to put great effort into the celebration. Over the centuries, the vigil was a solemn time when the great acts of God's deliverance of his people would be rehearsed in glorious ceremony throughout the night. Let's break down the service into various parts.

The darkness of the events of Good Friday continue as worshipers gather in darkness. The new Paschal Candle would be blessed and then lit for the first time. The Paschal Candle is the tall candle that burns from the first announcement of Christ's resurrection until the day of the Ascension of Jesus into heaven is celebrated. In many churches, as here at Osman, that candle is lit early enough on Sunday morning so that worshipers can see it burning when entering the church, and left burning after the service until most everyone leaves. It symbolizes the presence of the risen Christ with His disciples from Easter day through Ascension. When the candle is first lighted, the worship leader calls out "The light of Christ" and the congregation would respond "Thanks be to God." This would be repeated several times as the newly lit candle was carried through the congregation to the front of the church.

Following the singing of an ancient chant for Easter Vigil, worship consists basically of reading stories of God's goodness and deliverance throughout the Old Testament days. Creation starts it off, followed by the story of the flood. Following that is the near sacrifice of Isaac, and then the ancient Israelites, their slavery in Egypt, and God's mighty deliverance. Next is a section from the book of the

prophet Ezekiel, speaking about the Israelite people as wayward and deserving judgment. However, even in judgment, God's mercy is great, promising deliverance.

A major focus toward the end of the service is Baptism. From ancient times through the Middle Ages, those who had spent the time of Lent preparing for church membership would be baptized. Indeed, Jesus tied baptism with His own death when He asked the overzealous sons of Zebedee, "are you able to be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" The waters of the Red Sea, where former Egyptian slaves passed to become people of God, symbolize the waters of Baptism, where those lost in sin are redeemed and saved through the baptismal water.

The vigil of Easter is not celebrated much these days. I know of no Lutheran congregations in this area that do so. Roman Catholic churches are the most likely to celebrate this service. If you want to watch a service on Saturday evening (midnight in Rome), tune to EWTN – "Eternal Word Television Network". It is the worldwide network of the Catholic Church. Midnight in Rome is about 6PM in the central time zone. It is an impressive service in Rome's famed Coliseum.

The beginning of the service on Easter Sunday this year at Osman will incorporate the very beginning elements of the historic Easter Vigil. Remember! Easter service will be 7:00 AM!!

Church Directories

A 2026 church directory with updated address and phone numbers is available on the back elder pew. Please only take one per family.

Church Council Meeting

The next church council meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 15th, at 6:30 PM. The next congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, April 26th after the worship service.

Shut-in Visits

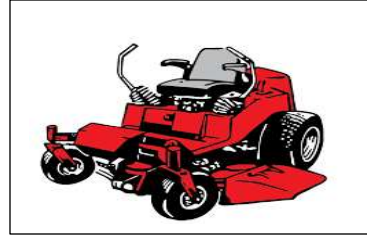
The Ladies Aid/LWML is revisiting a project to visit the shut-ins once a month throughout the year. Members can sign up for a month or months of their choice on the list on the back bulletin board. Reading a devotion or bringing a treat are an option for each visit. We will begin visiting in April. The shut-ins included at this time are Linda Warsaw, Karen Bryan, and Wilma Grussing.

Special Voters Meeting

A special voters meeting was held after the worship service on Sunday, March 15th. The members had been given information sheets on the two insurance companies that the council was considering for the next year. These were Country Companies and Brotherhood Mutual. Dwight Hooker, chairman, called the meeting to order and asked Jerry Niemann to give some remarks on the information on the handouts. The voters took a paper vote for their choice, and the winner was Brotherhood Mutual.

April Lawn Mowers

The week of March 29 - April 4 - Connie Warsaw
The week of April 5 - 11 - Jim VanWakeman
The week of April 12 – April 18 - Brenda Hendricks
The week of April 19 -25 – Dick Johnson
The week of April 26 – May 2 – Darwin Warsaw



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, it was in the March newsletter which can be found online and there is also one posted on the back bulletin board. If you have any questions, contact trustees John Grussing or Lee Whitehouse.

Quilting

The ladies will be quilting on April 6th at 12:30 AM and April 8th at 8 AM. Several Thrivent Action Team cards have been used to buy the filler for the center layer of the quilts. The quilts will be given to Lutheran World Relief and Orphan Grain Train. Twelve quilts will be given to Orphan Grain Train at the ingathering at the CID Convention in Decatur on April 25th. All ladies of the congregation are invited to help make these quilts as no quilting experience is needed to tie knots. These quilts bring smiles to many needy people in the United States and other countries.

Portals of Prayer Subscriptions

It is time to renew subscriptions to the Portals of Prayer. If you would like a subscription and have never had one, please contact Brenda Hendricks before April 10th. The members who already have subscriptions have been contacted about renewals. The congregation pays for the subscription.

Soup Supper Benefit

A benefit soup supper was held on Saturday, March 28th with a delicious menu of oyster soup, potato soup, chili, sandwiches, and desserts. Thank you to all the members who volunteered in a variety of ways. Several volunteers peeled potatoes and worked on setting up for the supper days before. On the evening of the supper there were many volunteers who helped with serving, waiting on tables, replenishing the food supplies, and washing dishes. Many thanks to the cooks and bakers who made the food for the crowd. The recipient of the benefit was Karley Bridgwater, age 27, who presently lives in Tuscola, but had many friends and relatives in Mahomet, Gibson City, Saybrook, and Bellflower who attended the supper. She has three children and has recently been diagnosed for the second time with breast cancer. At the time of the printing of this newsletter the total amount of money collected was not final. It will be printed in the near future.

Thank You

Thank you to Don Warsaw for trimming the dead branches off of all of the pine trees that border the railroad tracks. Thank you to Steve Martin who assisted by picking up all of the cut branches and hauling them to burn. The trees look much better and are enjoying the rain that we have received in the last few weeks. Thank you to Brenda Hendricks for raking all of the gravel out of the grass on the church lawn. The gravel was misplaced after the snow was plowed off of the parking lots.

Preparing for Easter 2026

Lenten Schedule

Maundy Thursday service will be held on April 2nd at 7 PM with a supper provided by the Ladies Aid/LWML ladies preceding the service with serving from 5:30 to 6:45. The supper will include lasagna, garlic bread, and desserts. Good Friday service will be held on April 3rd at 7 PM. The resurrection of our Savior will be celebrated on Easter morning, April 5th, at 7 AM.

Easter Lilies

Thank you to the following members who donated a lily to adorn our altar area: Brenda and Jerry Edwards, Brenda Hendricks, Sara and Dave Kunde, Debbie and John Lammle, Susan and Steve Martin, Melanie and Jerry Niemann, Sue and Jim Van Wakeman, and Connie and Don Warsaw. The lilies were purchased from the Paxton- Buckley – Loda High School Ag Program.

Easter Caroling

Everyone is invited to join in singing Easter hymns on April 12th after church to our shut-in members and others that enjoy hearing the Easter message. A small lunch of sandwiches, chips, and desserts will be provided after church for those wanting to go caroling. We will carpool to our destinations in rural Mansfield, Farmer City, Villas of Hollybrook in Gibson City, and Accolade Healthcare in Paxton. Please contact Alicia if you can join the group. You will be contacted as to what to bring for the “goodie” treats for our shut-ins. Let's share our Easter spirit and bring the love of Christ to those who do not always get to church.

Easter Cards

Invite all of your friends and neighbors to worship at Osman during Holy Week. There is a beautifully printed card with an envelope on the back elder pew for you to take with you and mail to a friend, relative, or neighbor. All of our worship services and times are listed on the card and also directions to our church. This is a great way to share the beautiful message of our risen Savior with our communities. Pick one up and get it in the mail TODAY!

Easter Breakfast

You are invited to enjoy the Easter Breakfast after the 7 AM worship service on Easter morning in the fellowship hall. The menu will include sausage and biscuits, fruit, coffee cakes, and drinks. Thank you to the church council members for providing the food and also for serving the breakfast.



Church History



Church history was made on Sunday, March 22nd! The first time in the history of our congregation that a worship service was held that the words of the service were spoken by a pastor and heard by the congregation with a pastor not being physically present. Pastor McPike had planned a vacation, but he could not find a substitute pastor, so he recorded the spoken parts of the whole service and Nick Haggin, computer genius, played them on the computer for the Sunday service. The order of Service was from the Service of Prayer and Preaching from the front of the Hymnal. The spoken part of the service was interspersed with hymns. We thank both Pastor McPike and Nick Haggin for their time in successfully providing this arrangement! The congregation presented Nick with a gift card after the service for his time and expertise for this program.

Ladies Aid/LWML Garage Sale

All Ladies Aid/LWML members are asked to gather garage sale items and mark them before bringing them to the church or taking them to Debbie Lammler's house for the Fisher City Wide Garage Sale on May 9th. The sale lasts from 8am -4pm. If you bring the items to the church, have them there by May 3rd. All proceeds will be given to our adopted family. All items not sold will be taken to Goodwill in Champaign, unless you wish to have them back. Thanks for your support in this group project!

Maundy Thursday Supper

The Ladies Aid/LWML will be serving a lasagna supper, with salad, bread, and dessert before the Maundy Thursday service on April 2nd. Serving will begin at 5:30 and last till 6:45 PM with the church service beginning at 7 PM. A free will offering will be taken, and all proceeds will go to our adopted seminary student.

Ladies Aid/LWML March Meeting

Nine ladies and one guest met on March 12th for the Ladies Aid/LWML meeting at 1:30 PM in the fellowship hall. The common table prayer was recited before delicious refreshments were served by Brenda Hendricks and Diana Zimmerman. After the meeting was called to order by President Debbie Lammler, the LWML Pledge was recited. Brenda Hendricks led a topic on our spiritual wardrobe. Roll call was answered by a Bible verse on believing. The minutes of the last meeting were read by Debbie Martin and were approved. The treasurer's report was given by Connie Warsaw, and it showed a balance of \$1860.52. The report was approved. The mites were collected,

and President Lammler led a mite prayer on the March mission grant. Brenda Edwards read a thank you from the Agnes Martinie Watson family for preparing the funeral dinner. Terri Hooker informed the group that 38 quilts have been tied since the beginning of the year.

In old business, A review of those signing up for our adopted family was given, followed by a report of those receiving food from our society. Dues will be collected in June or July (\$12 to the zone and \$5 to our local society) The group went over plans for the Maundy Thursday lasagna supper. All donations will be given to our seminary student, Johnathan Bernau. Directions were handed out for making prayer quilts.

In new business the group was informed that the mites collected in our CID so far total \$77,579.31. Final checks for mites should be post marked by March 15. President Lammler informed the group of upcoming events. The National Convention will be July 8-11, 2027 in Oklahoma City and the CID LWML Convention will be held on April 24 and 25 in Decatur. Deb Lammler and Brenda Hendricks will be the voting delegates. The CID mission grants committee met in November and reviewed 29 grant proposals. We will have a mission goal of \$110,000 for 2026-27 or \$220,000 for 2026-2028. The delegates will vote for 5 grants if the convention is held annually and 10 grants if held biennially. Student Aid for church workers will now automatically be funded and not appear on the ballot. The 2026 Fall Rally for the Danville and Champaign Zone will be held on September 8th. The location will be decided later. The rally theme is "Great is the Lord! Tell of His Mighty Acts to all Generations."

After discussion on upcoming projects, it was decided to visit the shut-ins once a month throughout the year. We are also having a garage sale at the home of Debbie and John Lammler on May 9th, 8:00-4:00 PM. Proceeds will be given to our seminary student. **Bring your marked garage sale items to 201 E. Randolph by May 8th or to the church on the Sunday before.**

Summary of February Council Meeting

Nine elected church officers attended the meeting on February 25th. The meeting began with a Bible reading from John 3 by Pastor McPike, followed by prayer. Chairman Dwight Hooker called the meeting to order. Melanie Niemann read the minutes from the January meeting in the absence of Debbie Lammler. After corrections were made, the minutes were approved as read. Terri Hooker read the treasurer's report with total expenses for the month as \$8352.91 and total income as \$9484.00. The balance for the end of November in the checking account was \$45,797.53. Treasurer's report was approved.

Pastor McPike informed the council that Confirmation will be held in the fall. Pastor Strom will lead the April 19th service in his absence. He is pre-recording parts of the March 22nd service and Nick Haggin will be operating the computer for the service since he cannot find a substitute pastor. The council approved a motion to purchase a gift card for Nick for his services.

The trustees reported that they will obtain updated bids for mold removal for the church. One bid for the company removing the pews and one for member volunteers to remove the pews.

In old business, additional information from the Country Financial and Brotherhood Mutual agents will be made available to the congregation on March 1 and March 8 on handouts

given out at church. A special voters' meeting will be held to resolve the insurance on March 15th after church. The Stewardship Committee reported that the soup supper will be in early spring this year instead of in the fall. Possible recipients were discussed, but additional communication with them was needed before a final decision will be made.

In new business, the Holy Week schedule was discussed. The ladies will be serving a meal prior to the Maundy Thursday service. The council will serve the Easter breakfast.

The next council meeting is Wednesday, March 18th, 2026.

The meeting was adjourned followed by reciting of the Lord's Prayer.

Summary of March Council Meeting

Ten elected church officers attended the meeting on March 18th. Chairman Hooker called the meeting to order, and asked Pastor McPike to give his report over the phone. Pastor began with prayer. He informed the council that all services were planned for Holy Week. He asked if we have a banner to advertise our upcoming schedule of services to be placed in the church yard. Secretary, Debbie Lammle, read the minutes from the last meeting. Minutes were approved. Terri Hooker read the treasurer's report with a balance of \$49,117.65. Total expenses were \$8,357.91 and total income was \$10,577.00. The treasurer's report was approved.

In old business it was determined that after the existing communion cards are used, additional cards will not be ordered. A bid from Serv Pro for removing the pews before cleaning the mold in the church will be requested. This will be compared to the work being completed by our members and friends. Jerry Niemann contacted both insurance agencies concerning the result of the vote to accept Brotherhood Mutual for the year 2026. The council approved a motion to start this change in insurance in April 2026. The Mission Outreach committee will include Dwight Hooker, Jerry Niemann, Diana Zimmerman, Brenda Edwards, and Sandy Whitehouse. They will be meeting after April 15th. Details and discussion about our church joining in some activities for the Fisher celebration in July followed.

In new business the council discussed the topic of giving offerings electronically. The topic was tabled until the next meeting. The chairman reminded the finance committee to double check that the offering checks have the complete date on them, which includes the year. The Easter breakfast was planned with the council members signing up for donated food.

The next council meeting is Wednesday, April 15th.

The meeting was adjourned followed by reciting of the Lord's Prayer.



- Chase Zimmerman04-03
- Erik Henriksen.....04-08
- Connie Warsaw.....04-12
- Leonard Delaney.....04-17
- Steven Sprau.....04-18
- Gina Feit (Masko).....04-19
- Hallie Payne.....04-23
- Bob Zimmerman.....04-23
- Linda Warsaw.....04-25
- Kristan Hansen.....04-25
- Deb Lammle.....04-26

Happy Anniversary!

Alicia and Nicholas Haggin..... 04-28-2007

Statistics

Date	Worship	Bible Class	Sunday School
March 1	44	11	1
March 8	43	11	1
March 15	38	13	2
March 22	30	No class	2

Trivia Question



This question was asked by Pastor McPike after church on March 8th....

“What is different about the front of our church today?”

The correct answer is the two return air vents that were tan boxes on top of the wooden altar walls were removed. The vents are still there, but they do not reach high enough to be seen above the paneling. Sorry, there is no prize for the correct answer!

“It wasn’t nails that held Him to the cross, but His love for you and me.” (Anonymous Quote)