

Welcome

CONTACT INFORMATION

Immanuel Lutheran Church
37515 Park Trail, Center City, MN 55012
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Phone: 651-583-2340
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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/immanuelchurchofalmelund>

Justin Fenger, Pastor
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651-308-7717

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651-431-8941

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jlnelson62@centurylink.net
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Office Hours: M-Tu 9-5 W 9-3:30
unless otherwise noted. Cell phone is
always available @ 651-431-8941

IMMANUEL STAFF

Justin Fenger, Pastor
Momoh Freeman, Organist
Pat Remer, Accompanist
Volunteers Church Custodian
Mark Weslander, Administrative Assistant &
Financial Recorder/Secretary
Daryl Abrahamson, Cemetery Groundskeeper
Jason & DeeDee Fredlund, Youth Directors

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

37515 Park Trail, Almelund, MN 55012

Pastor Justin Fenger

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

September 17, 2023

A welcoming community rooted in Christ, growing in faith and serving with joy!



Welcome to Immanuel!

Thank you for joining us for our worship service. Whoever you are, whatever you've done, or where ever you are in life. You are loved by God which means, You are welcome here at Immanuel. God's grace is given freely, not earned. So whatever journey you are on, God led you here today. We thank you for coming and hope to see you again soon.

Visitors, welcome to worship! If you are interested in knowing more about our congregation please speak to Pastor Justin or call the church office! Contact info is on the back of this bulletin.

We Encourage all Children who can read, to follow along in the bulletin during our worship service.

GATHERING

Today's Service is using the **HFG**; Baby Blue Book

PRELUDE:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

INTRODUCTION:

The disciples asked Jesus how many times they should forgive. Jesus' response was clear. We can continue to forgive over and over again.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

L: Where there are winners there are losers.

C: Whilst one cheers, another weeps.

L: There are two sides to every story.

C: The only place to be is on God's side.

L: When uncertainty reigns, and fears abound and the future is unclear, the only place to be is on God's side.

C: As we come to him in worship, we do so in the knowledge that God is always by our side.

OPENING HYMN: Praise To The Lord (v.v.1,4) #337 HFG

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of grace and mercy,
You have forgiven us far more and more often than we deserve. Make us equally forgiving to all those in our lives, that we may live together in harmony, in Jesus' name. Amen.

CHILDREN'S SERMON:

SPECIAL MUSIC: I'll Tell The World That I'm A Christian
Sung by Regina Jesse

I'll tell the world that I'm a Christian I'm not ashamed His name to bear
I'll tell the world that I'm a Christian I'll take Him with me anywhere
I'll tell the world how Jesus saved me And how He gave me a life brand new
And I know that if you trust Him That all He gave me He'll give to you
I'll tell the world that He's my Savior No other one could love me so
My life my all is His forever And where He leads me I will go
(V.2) I'll tell the world that He is coming It may be near or far away
But we must live as if His coming Would be tomorrow or today
For when He comes and life is over For those who love Him there's more to
be Eyes have never seen the wonders That He's preparing for you and me
O tell the world that you're a Christian Be not ashamed His name to bear
O tell the world that you're a Christian And take Him with you ev'rywhere

FIRST READING:

Genesis 50:15-21

After Jacob's death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

PSALM:

Psalms 103: [1-7] 8-13

R: Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

C: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits

R: who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases;

**C: who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

R: who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

**C: O LORD, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**

R: You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.

**C: LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

R: you will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger forever.

**C: You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

R: For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

**C: As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

R: As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

We invite you to follow the service and take part in a way that feels right to you.

P = Pastor
L = Leader
C = **Congregation**
R = Reader

Sections in **bold** are to be read by the congregation.

Today's Scripture

Genesis 50:15-21
Psalms 103: [1-7] 8-13
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

Today's Hymns

Hymn #337 HFG
Hymn #641 HFG
Hymn #21 HFG
Hymn #363 HFG

**Happy Birthday
this week!**

18
Lori Carr
19
Emma Bergerson
20
Bryan Peterson
21
Carter Rothe
Steve Blomquist
Erin Tauer
22
Janet Johnson
Henry Larkin

SECOND READING:

Romans 14:1-12

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Pass It On (v.1)

#641 HFG

GOSPEL:

Matthew 18:21-35

Glory to you O Lord

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ

SERMON:

HYMN OF THE DAY: Love Divine (v.v.1,2,3)

#21 HFG

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:

God of grace,

hear our prayer.

**Thank you for helping
lead worship today!**

Leader:
Jason Fredlund

Organist:
Momoh Freeman

Special Music:
Regina Jesse

Reader:
Lois Ness

Ushers:
Norm & Linda
Peterson

Sound Tech:
Nancy Nadeau

Camera Tech:
Jodi Johnson-Waldemar

Children's Sermon:
Jason Fredlund

Altar Guild:
Jeske Noordergraaf

Coffee Servers:
NONE Apple Fest.

**Immanuel Church
Calendar This Week**

Sunday, September 17

9:30 Worship Service Live
and Online.

No Communion

11:00 Counters count

Offering?

28th Annual Apple Festival

Monday, September 18

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE

9-5 Office Hours

5:00 Stewardship Meeting

Tuesday, September 19

9-5 Office Hours

9:00 Worship Team Meets

9:30 Naomi Circle meets at
Joanne Johnson's

Wednesday, September 20

9-3:30 Office Hours

12:00 Deadline for bulletin
Info

1:00 **Newsletter** is ready for
proofreading in room B

1:30 Prayer Shawl Meets

2:00 Bulletins Printed

Thursday, September 21

1:00 **Newsletter Assembly** in
the Fireside room

Friday, September 22

3-6 Farmers Market

Saturday, September 23

Sunday, September 24

9:30 Worship Service Live
and Online. W/Special
Music by; Althea Gibson
AND Reception of new
members

10:30 Coffee Served:

Pancake Breakfast

11:00 Counters count offering

OFFERTORY: Come Ye Thankful People Come
Lyrics found in HFG #392
Sung by Regina Jesse

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

Generous God,
all that we have is yours. Help us to give back to you all that we have received. Help us not to give into fear but to know that you have and will provide for us and that you invite us to give as generously as you have. Take all that we offer this day and use it to continue to build you kingdom here on earth. Amen.

LITANY:

L: It is not always easy to forgive.

C: Our feelings are easily hurt.

L: We may not even realize why.

C: Underneath there is fear.

L: Fear of not having enough.

C: Fear of not being enough.

L: We feel threatened, and so we are angry.

C: But Jesus calls us to forgive.

L: Not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

C: Forgiveness means being free of resentment.

L: Forgiveness is as much a gift to ourselves as to others.

C: Let us err on the side of compassion.

L: Let us give the benefit of the doubt.

C: Let us remember that God has forgiven us,

L: Even when we have not deserved it.

C: Let us forgive as God forgives, and live in peace with our community.

BLESSING:

The God of glory, Jesus Christ, name above all names,
and the Spirit who lives in you, bless you now and forever.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: To God Be The Glory #363 HFG

DISMISSAL:

Go in peace, God is at work in you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE:

“I’ll Tell The World That I’m A Christian”

Baynard L. Fox

CCLI Song #19045 1958, 1986 Fox Music Publications

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

28th ANNUAL APPLE FESTIVAL

TODAY Sunday, September 17,2023 – 11:00-4:00

NEXT SUNDAY!!!

Rally Sunday is September 24.th We are also looking for 1-2 teachers for Sunday School to join the rest of our team this fall, once a month or more if interested. Experience in teaching is not necessary, but the experience of feeling joy thru the eyes of the students is highly likely. The benefits are fruitful! Please contact Teresa Carlson if interested, 651-214-9531.

ALSO: On Rally Sunday is the Pancake Breakfast, after the service served by Men of Immanuel. **AND** Installation of new members. If anyone is interested in becoming a member, please notify Pastor Justin at, pastor@immanuelalmelund.com or by phone 651-308-7717

Mark Your Calendars - Sunday, September 24th @ 2:00:

Sunrise River Trio will be performing on the Amador Museum grounds for a fundraising event to benefit the Chisago County Historical Society. Proceeds raised will go toward a new HVAC system. In case of rain, program will be at Immanuel. Bring own lawn chairs.

**September 10, 2023
Attendance: 76**

**Weekly Giving Update:
September 10, 2023**

General	\$2,592.00
Benevolence	\$310.00
Building Fund	\$50.00
Memorials	\$125.00
Special Donation	\$200.00
Loose	\$45.80
Online Serv. Fee	<u>\$9.60</u>
Total	\$3,332.40

September 3rd
Noisy Offering \$94.14

Almelund Farmers Market Began its 16th Season on Friday, May 26th at Rod's. Come Friday afternoons from 3-6pm and check out the local items... annuals, perennials and garden plants, asparagus, rhubarb, eggs, maple syrup, honey, breads, jams/jellies, craft items and other goodies! Products change with the season. New vendors are encouraged and welcomed to join this fun community get-together. If interested, contact Pat @ 651-583-2100. Last day is September 29th.

Altar Guild It has been brought to our attention that there has been a request for real flowers on the altar.

Altar Guild would gladly purchase real flowers if any one wants to donate \$50 toward a Sunday. We would need to know at least a week in advance.

Tune in our Daily Texts, Monday through Saturday on our Facebook

Page @immanuelutheranchurchofalmelund

A daily devotional time based on an Old and New Testament bible verse based on a Moravian Church tradition and Ground Up Grace Publications.

SUNRISE RIVER Trio

Sept 30 Wild River Outfitters, Grantsburg 1:00-5:00

ATTENTION; NEW EMAILS:!!!

Church Email: office@immanuelalmelund.com

Pastor Justin's Email: pastor@immanuelalmelund.com

Mark's Email: office@immanuelalmelund.com

Finance email: finance@immanuelalmelund.com

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

By end of day Monday, September 18th.

Please have all reports, announcements, thank yous and corrections in by this time.

PROOFREADING:

Of newsletter @ 1:00 Wednesday, September 20th, in room B. Your help will be greatly appreciated. All are welcome.

NEWSLETTER ASSEMBLY:

Will be Thursday, September 21st @ 1:00 in the Fireside Room.

Volunteers can fill newsletters with offering envelopes and label for mailing. On Sunday morning service: September 24th, members can pickup their own newsletter in the gathering area.

Thank you for your help! Mark Weslander

Coming in October: The Almelund Sampler; 10/22/2023 from 1-4 W/Live Auction. Donations of NEW Items needed for auction.

THANK YOU

Dear Ladies,

I certainly appreciate the beautiful yellow prayer shawl I received from you wrapped with a prayer card filled with faith, hope, and love. That is so kind of you to be thinking of me and your group praying for me during this ups and down trip. It is not a curable disease but I'm waiting for the day I am in remission and can be treated less frequently.

I appreciate our dear friends Lois and Marlin who have been so caring.

We are blessed with a supportive family and many caring friends like all of you which really helps to encourage me to remain strong.

Again, thank you for your kindness.

I love your church which we had the pleasure of attending years ago.

Thank you and God Bless---

Love,

Karen Kaldor



Hello Women Ministries

We would like to invite our sister believers from all over our community to the Alliance Church of the Valley on October 7th. Join us as we gather to worship the Lord and do a deep dive into Scripture led by Priscilla Shirer via simulcast. Please join us October 7, from 9am-3 pm. Just \$20 for Early Bird registration AND payment by September 15th to ACV, \$30 after that date. See you there! Please use the QR code to register and checks can be sent to :

ATTN: Women's Ministry
Alliance Church of the Valley
1259 State Road 35
St Croix Falls, WI 54024

We look forward to out time together!

All-Age Prayer

Thank you, God, for each new day. Thank you, God, for the life we have. Thank you, God, for families and friends. Thank you, God, for loving us. Forgive us, God, when we fail you. Forgive us, God, when we make mistakes. Forgive us, God, when we give into fear. Forgive us, God, when we are selfish. O God, you love us and you offer us a new start, a clean slate. Help us to put the past behind us. Give us courage to face the future and whatever it holds. In the name of your Son we pray. Amen.

Prayers for Others and Ourselves

Eternal God, everlasting one. Thank you for this short span of life you give us on this wonderful earth. As we look to your eternal presence we are reminded of our smallness. Each of us: precious and unique, but only a tiny part of the bigger picture. We come today in the name of all people to ask for your help. We offer our prayers for the people and situations in our world that we are afraid of or anxious about. Offer a time of silence here or an opportunity for people to come forward and write names of places or situations they want to pray for on a sticky note and place on a map of the world, perhaps play a piece of music as this is happening. O God, you know our thoughts, our hopes, our dreams and our fears. We offer them to you today and ask you to pour out your Spirit into every person and situation we have named. May all people have a sense of your loving, caring presence. May they be comforted and encouraged by it. Help us to be the one who is present when we can, to offer a word or action that will alleviate their pain or take away their fear. Give us confidence to take action, give us strength to go for the long term solutions rather than the quick fixes. God in your mercy, hear our prayers. Amen.

Reflection

There is a danger that when we move on we forget the past and do not want to think about it again. Often, however, reflecting on the past is a way of shaping the future. The Hebrews did that and have continued to do that at Passover where the youngest asks, 'Why do we do this?' and so the whole story of escape is retold again and again. What stories of the past in your own faith community have been stories that have shaped who you are? Invite three or four people, in 150 words, to retell one of these stories (the discipline would be to keep it to 150) reflecting on how they have seen God work and bring your faith community to where it is now. Sometimes it is hard to discern God but then perhaps that is one of the chapters when God has been difficult to find. Such honesty would be very faithful. Between each mini-story a chant or verse of a hymn could be sung such 'Lord for the years' or 'O God you search me and you know me'. A follow-up activity could be the creation of an exhibition for people to look at after the service that takes a look back at some of the stories told in photos or drawings that celebrate where God has been.

September 17, 2023 LECTIONARY 24

God's Immeasurable Mercy

Forgive seventy-seven times? Jesus' instruction seems, at best, all but impossible and, at worst, dangerous. Sometimes the Bible has been used to excuse abuse in the name of mercy, but Jesus doesn't mean to condone suffering for its own sake or to commit us to endlessly enduring hurt and harm. Instead, Jesus wants to orient Peter and us to the all-encompassing nature of forgiveness. Seven days make the week complete and whole. Grace also extends to us the promise of wholeness, and yet forgiveness that comes from the heart is immeasurable.

Forgive seventy-seven times. The number suggests that forgiveness isn't to be doled out or strictly accounted for, but rather is endless. Forgiveness is not a singular event as much as it is a process. We are amazed and rightly inspired when some Christians are able to so quickly forgive others even the most horrendous crimes, like the Amish community after the West Nickel Mines School shooting in 2006, or some families of the Emanuel Nine in 2015. But today's gospel does not preclude the rest of us. Probably for most of us, forgiveness is much more the destination we are journeying toward than the place at which we've already arrived. Jesus' encouragement to Peter can encourage us as well.

Every day God calls us back to the everlasting promises made in baptism. Our participation in the church's worship life assures us that forgiveness is not something we endeavor to do alone, but rather is a lifelong journey in which we can turn to one another for support. Every Sunday at Jesus' table, we are freely given the bread of mercy and cup of forgiveness. God's grace sets all of us free to extend that same mercy to others. God's forgiveness erases every debt.

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