

Welcome

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
37515 Park Trail, Center City, MN 55012  
**Email:** [office@immanuelalmelund.com](mailto:office@immanuelalmelund.com)  
**Phone:** 651-583-2340  
**Website:** [www.immanuelalmelund.org](http://www.immanuelalmelund.org)  
**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/immanuelchurchofalmelund>

**Justin Fenger, Pastor**  
[pastor@immanuelalmelund.com](mailto:pastor@immanuelalmelund.com)  
651-308-7717

**Mark Weslander, Administrative Assistant**  
[office@immanuelalmelund.com](mailto:office@immanuelalmelund.com)  
651-431-8941

**Momoh Freeman, Organist/Director**  
[Momohfreeman@yahoo.com](mailto:Momohfreeman@yahoo.com)  
(763)415-0330

**Teresa Carlson, Sunday School Leader**  
651-214-9531

**Jason & DeeDee Fredlund, Youth Directors**  
[jfredlund@frontiernet.net](mailto:jfredlund@frontiernet.net)  
**Jason** 651-208-5915  
**DeeDee** 651-206-1190

**Judy Nelson, Prayer Chain**  
[jlnelson62@centurylink.net](mailto:jlnelson62@centurylink.net)  
651-674-5920

**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**  
**Teresa Carlson, Sunday School Leader**



## IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

37515 Park Trail, Almelund, MN 55012

Pastor Justin Fenger

17th Sunday After Pentecost

September 24, 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 **ELW**; Red Book

**PRELUDE:**

**WELCOME ANNOUNCEMENTS: RALLY SUNDAY**

**CALL TO WORSHIP:**

**A Prayer for Young People**

*(1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 & Luke 2:41-52)*

Leader: Samuel was just a boy before the Lord!

**People: Jesus, just a preteen, in the temple with the elders!**

Leader: God, speak to the young people of our community

While they are just girls, just boys, standing here in your presence.

**People: God, speak to our hearts, so that we might not be tempted to hush our young people, or banish them from your presence as though you had nothing to say to them.**

Leader: Samuel began his great ministry as a young child in priestly clothing.

**People: People began to take notice of Jesus as a preteen sharing great wisdom with the elders.**

**All: God, here are our young people. Help them listen; help us listen with them. Amen.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Holy God, cover our lives with your Spirit, and inspire us in the ways of compassion, kindness, and grace, so we can indeed find our way toward forgiveness and tenderness, and find life in Christ our Lord. Amen

**OPENING HYMN:** Come, All You People #819 ELW

**New Member Liturgy**

Minister: Today we make a covenant, one with another. We make promises to one another, before God, so that we can depend on each other through good times and hard times. You have a church and a people. And so now we ask you:

Do you affirm your faith in God as your Creator, in Christ as your inspiration, and in the Holy Spirit as your strength? If so, please say, I do.

**I do.**

Do you promise to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of Jesus, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to be a witness to the healing ministry and the loving message of Jesus Christ as best as you are able? If so, please say, I promise with the help of God.

**I promise with the help of God.**

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in faith and to be an active and joyful member of this church? If so, please say, I promise with the help of God.

**I promise with the help of God.**

Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world? If so, please say, I promise with the help of God.

**I promise with the help of God.**

**PROMISE FROM THE CHURCH:**

To the members of this church: Do you promise to help them find their place in the body of Christ, to pray with and for them, to welcome them fully in holy friendship, to be angels for them in times of distress and servants to them in times of need? If so, please answer: We promise, with the help of God.

**We promise, with the help of God.**

**THE CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE:**

Minister: Let us, the members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Almelund, express our welcome and affirm our ministry together.

**Congregation: We joyfully welcome you into the common life of our church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share in the hopes and labors of this church. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we grow together in faith and be witnesses to the love of God and the peace of Christ.**

**THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP:**

Minister: In the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of our congregation, we extend to you the right hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company and family of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Almelund

(All council members, current and past will be invited forward to extend the right hand of fellowship. The congregation sings, Hymn #677 "This Little Light of Mine" All people will be encouraged to extend a hand of fellowship door stairs after the service).

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

Hearing devices are available from an usher.

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

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

**Today's Scripture**

Jonah 3:10—4:11  
Psalm 145:1-8  
Philippians 1:21-30  
Matthew 20:1-16

**Today's Hymns**

Hymn #819 (ELW)  
Hymn #677 (ELW)  
Hymn #604 (ELW)  
Hymn #603 (ELW)  
Hymn #863 (ELW)

**Happy Birthday  
this week!**

24  
Linda Holm  
25  
Kristine Koran  
Cheryl Bergerson  
26  
Andrea Boyer  
Nancy Nadeau  
Ida Johnson  
28  
Brianna Mohn  
30  
Kate DeVault

**BLESSING ON MEMBERS:**

Minister: Loving God, give to your children, strength for life's journey, courage in times of suffering, the comfort of faith, love that cannot die, laughter in the company of friends, and the hope of new life; through Jesus Christ, who makes us one. Amen.

**SPECIAL MUSIC:** "Goodness of God", by Cece Winans  
Sung by Althea Gibson

**CHILDREN'S SERMON:**

**FIRST READING:** 1 Samuel 2:18-20,26

18 Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy wearing a linen ephod. <sup>19</sup>His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. <sup>20</sup>Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the LORD repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the LORD'; and then they would return to their home. <sup>26</sup> Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the LORD and with the people.

**PSALM:** Psalm 148

R: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens;  
praise him in the heights! Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

**C: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!  
Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**

R: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded  
and they were created. He established them for ever and ever;  
he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

**C: Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,  
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

R: Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!  
Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

**C: Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers  
of the earth! Young men and women alike, old and young together!**

R: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted;  
his glory is above earth and heaven.

**C: He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful,  
for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!**

**SECOND READING:** Colossians 3:12-17

12 As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. <sup>14</sup>Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup>And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. <sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord                      **Thanks be to God**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** O Christ, Our Hope (v.1)                      #604 ELW

**GOSPEL:** Luke 2:41-52

**Glory to you, O Lord**

The Boy Jesus in the Temple

41 Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup>And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. <sup>43</sup>When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. <sup>44</sup>Assuming that he was in the group of travellers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup>When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. <sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' <sup>49</sup>He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' <sup>50</sup>But they did not understand what he said to them. <sup>51</sup>Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

The Gospel of the Lord                      **Praise to you, O Christ**

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

**Pastor:**  
Justin Fenger

**Organist:**  
Momoh Freeman

**Special Music:**  
Althea Gibson

**Reader:**  
Kaitlin Carlson

**Ushers:**  
Norm & Linda Peterson

**Sound Tech:**  
Julie Johnson

**Camera Tech:**  
Vern Johnson

**Children's Sermon:**  
Sharon Thiel

**Altar Guild: Green**  
Jeske Noordergraaf

**Teachers:**  
Valerie, Cami, Teresa

**Coffee Servers:**  
Pancake Breakfast  
by Men of Immanuel

**Immanuel Church  
Calendar This Week**

**Sunday, September 24  
RALLY SUNDAY**  
9:30 Worship Service Live  
and Online.  
10:30 Coffee Served:  
NO SERVERS  
11:00 Counters count offering

**Monday, September 25**  
9-5 Office Hours  
6:00 Worship & Music meets

**Tuesday, September 26**  
9-5 Office Hours  
9:00 Worship Team meets

**Wednesday, September 27**  
9-3:30 Office Hours  
12:00 Deadline for bulletin  
Info  
2:00 Bulletins Printed

**Thursday, September 28**

**Friday, September 29**  
3-6 **LAST** Farmers Market of  
the season

**Saturday, September 30**

**Sunday, October 1**  
9:30 Communion Worship  
Service Live and Online,  
W/Noisy Offering;  
Sunday School is after  
children's sermon  
10:30 Coffee Served:  
11:00 Counters count offering

**SERMON:**

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** God, When Human Bonds Are Broken  
(v.v.1,4,5) #603 ELW

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:**

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

**OFFERTORY:** "Hymn Medley", sung by Althea Gibson

**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.**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION/OFFERING:**

**You bless us with an abundance of gifts, God of this holy season, not as a reward for doing good, but as a means to reach out with healing to the broken, to clothe those who shiver in winter, and to bless others with the hope which has been ours. As we offer our gifts to you, we do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**LORD'S PRAYER:**

**BENEDICTION:**

When you work, work as though worked for the Lord.  
When you rest, rest in the sovereign grace of God  
And when you celebrate, celebrate as a people with the greatest reason for love, joy, and celebration.  
Go now in the grace and forgiveness of our Savior,  
and in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

**CLOSING HYMN:** My God, How Wonderful Thou Art  
#863 ELW

**DISMISSAL:**

Go in peace. God is at work in you. **Thanks be to God.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Rally Sunday is TODAY September 24.<sup>th</sup>.**

**Please join us after service for the pancake breakfast.**

Thank you men of Immanuel for putting this on for us.

**We also welcome our new members:**

**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.

**Altar Guild**

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 [@immanuellutheranchurchofalmelund](https://www.facebook.com/immanuellutheranchurchofalmelund)

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

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

**September 17, 2023  
Attendance: 60**

**Weekly Giving Update:  
September 17, 2023**

General	\$2,544.00
Benevolence	\$10.00
Building Fund	\$2.00
Loose	\$360.00
Office Reim.	\$100.00
Memorials	\$20.00
Online Serv. Fee	\$1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,037.00</b>

### **Almelund Sampler is Back!**

Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 22nd - 1-4:00.

The afternoon begins at 1:00 with a "sampling of music". After the program, LeeAnn Vande Kamp, "Auctioneer Extraordinaire" will take charge of the Live Auction. Donations of **NEW** items would be appreciated. Worship & Music will serve Layer Cakes and beverages.

### **Attention - Singers Needed During Taylors Falls Lighting Festival**

Tyler Olson will direct the community chorus for the Coral Vespers held Saturday, November 25, 4:30 PM, during Taylors Falls Lighting Festival. Olson's experience in directing the choir at Trinity Lutheran Church, North Branch, demonstrates his success in bringing out the best in those who sing. Pat Remer is the accomplished accompanist. The service is thought many to be the centerpiece of the three-day festival.

We need singers, past participants and first timers, both men and women, for this unique service. There are five Sunday evening rehearsals: October 22, 29, November 5, 12 and 19, starting promptly at 6:30 PM to 8 PM at the 1861 United Methodist Church, 190 W Government St., where the service is also held. Please pre-register using [wwymd@aol.com](mailto:wwymd@aol.com) to sign in. Leave your name, voice range and telephone number. You will receive direct email communications and additional information. Thank you for your participation.

### **ATTENTION; NEW EMAILS:!!!**

**Church Email:** office@immanuelalmelund.com  
**Pastor Justin's Email:** pastor@immanuelalmelund.com  
**Mark's Email:** office@immanuelalmelund.com  
**Financial Email:** finance@immanuelalmelund.com

### **THANK YOU**

Martha,

Thank you for the lovely note and beautiful prayer shawl. I have wrapped it around me many times thinking of the special ladies in your prayer group who make the lovely shawls.

It was quite a shock to get the multiple myeloma diagnosis, but made up my mind to start treatment as soon as possible

Thanks again for your thoughtfulness. I cherish the shawl.

Char

Prayer Shawl Group of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Almelund,

Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is much appreciated.

Love,

Tina

Many, Many THANKS to everyone who helped in any way with Almelund's 28th Apple Festival. What a great day we had to celebrate this fun, educational community event. We often hear how much people look forward to this experience and without all the awesome volunteers, the event would not be the success it is. So, **Thank You Volunteers** for continuing to make "*Almelund the Busiest Small Town in Minnesota*" ❤️

## **ALL-AGE PRAYER:**

Rules, rules, rules. Everywhere we go—don't do this, don't do that. At school, in the home, at work, in the worlds. Even in church, God. Everywhere we go – don't do this, don't do that. Lord God, sometimes we think it would be a lot easier and a lot more fun if we could just do things the way we want to do them, forgetting the rules. But would it? God, help us ask the difficult questions that sometimes we avoid: Who would get hurt? Who would lose out? What damage would be done to others? What damage would be done to me? What damage could I do to my own self? We know your hope for our world is one where we don't need rules, but this world is not perfect and we need help, we need guidance to keep us right with you and with each other. Maybe rules are there to help us? To help and protect us as individuals and help us to grow to become better families, schools, work places, churches and communities. Lord, help us see rules not as lists of 'don'ts', nor as ways to stop us having fun, but as ways to live together better, making a positive contribution to the places in which we live, and the people with whom we share life. Amen.

## **Prayers for Others and Ourselves**

God, we agree to lots of things in life. We agree to contracts in our jobs, credit agreements with our banks, acceptable sharing of responsibilities in our relationships, and to abide by the codes, rules and regulations of the clubs and organisations to which we belong. To what do we agree in making a commitment to live as your people? Remind us that you have made a covenant with us. We belong to you. You have given us the spirit of life; and in the dying act of Jesus Christ, you have released us from all that holds us back and so set us on a course to go into life and build communities that reflect the nature, personality and priorities of your Son. Today we covenant to be a loyal and faithful people who are ready to abide by the rules of your kingdom. We covenant to respect our brothers and sisters in Christ; to honour every part of creation and to honour you, the creator who gave life to all things. We pray today for those people who are hurt by others: those who have been physically harmed, sexually abused, taken for granted, left behind. We pray for those who are the victims of crime and those who perpetrate, or would perpetrate, criminal action on others: that they may undergo a transformation of heart and mind-set. We pray for those who feel disregarded, ignored, undervalued and downtrodden by those in power. This day let us be the people who take on responsibility for working things through and building true community in the places where we work, live, and worship. Let us not be content with a world that only makes it half-way there; but let us instead give our all for the kingdom, that it be established once and for all as a place where all are welcome and all are cared for. Amen.

## **Reflection**

God, creative and giving, is the source of all that is and is yet to be, the infuser of love that is ours before we even know it, the giver of life, the heartbeat at the centre of creation. God calls us to be a holy people and in our greatest moments we respond with thanksgiving and love, reflecting the glory of God's creative urgency, bringing compassion and healing to a world still aching with the birth pangs of living together in community. Yet those moments of greatness are fleeting, for too often we do not respond in love, preferring the shadowlands of our own selfish desires. Into those limitations of our own making come the rules that guide us and shape us, inspired by love to help us reach for greatness. The rules of life, written from a community's shared wisdom— a community whose being rested in God's love, a love seeking expression and comprehension, activity and ethic— come to us through the long history of peoples ancient and modern seeking understanding of living in community, infused by God's self-giving love. In our brokenness we see through a glass dimly and fall over ourselves in our attempts at communal living. We rail against the rules that are there to help us. We tarnish the glow of their wisdom and purpose: taking the gift of freedom and calling it independence; taking the gift of intelligence and calling it our own opinion; taking the gift of creativity and turning it into rampant consumerism. The call is here, it never stops, that we return to the mountain of God, to where it all began. Slavery to whatever binds us is no more, God has freed us, now we are to live as if we believe it, reflecting the greatness of God, and carried by grace into the heart of his wisdom, a wisdom founded on love.

**September 24, 2023**

**LECTIONARY 25**

**Daily Bread for Everyone**

We all have a natural sense of justice, and of what is fair. We might easily conflate the two, but justice and fairness don't always lead to the same end. Jesus' parable of the landowner and the workers suggests that God's sense of justice might not seem fair to everyone. Our ideas of what is right are likely upended by the landowner's generosity. He gives to each worker not what they have earned but rather the "daily bread" they need.

Sometimes in the church's ministry, we behave in a spirit exactly opposite that of the parable's landowner, opting to be "fair" above all else. So, for example, the food pantry can insist on the same items in the same amount for everyone, or the soup kitchen rules dictate that everyone get the same thing on their tray. Yet everyone doesn't always have the same needs. What if instead of fairness, we also made a way for generosity to sometimes disrupt the rules? There are good reasons for insisting on fairness. Rules establish helpful boundaries. Fairness can help ensure that when resources are scarce, everyone has a chance to receive something. Yet, in the name of fairness, we can also overlook both God's abundant generosity and the actual needs of others.

Maybe Jesus' parable doesn't mean changing the rules altogether. But maybe it means leaving ample space for those situations in which emulating God's generosity means bending the rules. God's grace frees us from a stubborn insistence on "only what's fair" so that we can care for others with generous spirits. No matter when we come to the baptismal waters, God's word of grace is enough to cover our sins. No matter our circumstances when we are gathered at Christ's table, God's generosity means there is always enough for each and every one of us to receive the daily bread we need.

Reprinted from *Words for Worship*, copyright 2022 Augsburg Fortress.  
Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.