

# Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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September 25, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Forgiven in Christ, all things are made new. The author of Hebrews fleshes this out, and connects this to our fellowship in the Divine Service. *“Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”* (Heb. 10:19-25)

Confidence, full assurance of faith, the confession of our hope, love and good works, meeting together – what a powerful Word of God, packed full of His truths for us to hear and believe in these days. I want to encourage each one of you to love and good works, and to gather around our Lord Jesus Christ to receive His gifts in Word and Sacrament.

Beginning on Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, we will be offering one Divine Service at 9:00 a.m. with Sunday School, Youth and Adult Bible classes to follow (10:15–11:15 a.m.). We will continue to livestream the Divine Service through Facebook live, and a follow-along bulletin will be posted to the church website ([www.immanueleagle.org](http://www.immanueleagle.org)) before the service. A recording of the service, and a copy of the sermon will be posted to the website at the beginning of the week. Let us know if you have questions about these resources.

We understand that some may have concerns about coming to church, or even moving towards a Divine Service without social distancing. As always, those who are not comfortable coming to church should contact Pastor so that he can provide you with pastoral care. Below are more detailed plans for the Divine Services, beginning on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Parish Hall: The overflow area in the parish hall will be open and reserved for those who feel more comfortable with social distancing. We ask that people who desire social distancing to contact the church office ([immanueloffice@windstream.net](mailto:immanueloffice@windstream.net) or 402-781-2190) before noon on Friday each week in order to reserve your place. This will help us to provide the appropriate seating to allow for social distancing. There will be an offering plate on a table in the parish hall for your offering, as well as hymnals and bulletins for you to pick up for the service. You can bring your own hymnal as well. Those in the overflow area will be ushered to communion first (with social distancing). As always, you have the option of kneeling at the communion rail, or not.

Sanctuary: People who choose to sit in the sanctuary will be able to select their own seats and will therefore not be socially distanced. Those who will be sitting in the sanctuary do not need to contact the church office to reserve a place. Please communicate with one another as you find your seats. If you would like a little space, let people know as they come to sit by you. This is an opportunity for the “love and good works” that we hear of in Hebrews. Bear with one another, dear brothers and sisters, especially in these days.

The hymnals will once again be in the pew racks. You can bring your own hymnal as well. There will be a table with hymnals, bulletins and an offering plate at the back of the church (as has been the case these past few months).

In addition to these changes, we will continue to encourage other mitigation efforts that have been in place. First and foremost, if you are sick, please stay at home (and contact Pastor). Other things we ask you to consider, but are not required, include washing your hands when entering the building, using hand sanitizer, and wearing a mask while in church.

Here are a few other updates on the activities of the congregation.

Council & Voters' Meetings: The Church Council will meet on Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. The Voters' Assembly will meet on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> after the Divine Service. The agenda will include the budget, and the election of Officers and Board members for 2021. All voters are encouraged to attend.

Ushers & Acolytes: Beginning October 4<sup>th</sup>, we will once again be following the schedule for ushers and acolytes. Please check your schedules.

Tuesday Matins & Bible Study continue to meet at 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. respectively. Following the Matins service of Scripture and prayer, we continue our study of St. Matthew's Gospel. There is plenty of room, so even if you have not attended in the past, feel free to join us at any time.

Sunday School, Youth and Adult Bible Classes will return to the normal schedule (10:15–11:15 a.m.) on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

Catechesis Classes are underway with 12 students attending the two different classes on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:45 p.m.

Lawn mowing: We still have about a month of lawn mowing left in this season and could use some volunteers to mow the church lawn. The church has riding lawnmowers for you to use. You may contact the church office (call or email) to sign up, or sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in the hallway leading to the parish hall.

Questions / Comments / Concerns: As always, please contact me!

“Fear, love and trust in God above all things.” Peace be with you.

*Pastor Porath*