

THE VISION

February, 2017

IMMANUEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A Call to Prayer—A Way to Move Forward

Last Sunday, I asked for us to be in prayer for the United Methodist Church in general, and the Bishops that will be praying for a way in which to move forward through many controversial subjects such as human sexuality, and the future of our denomination. Below is a letter from Bishop Frank Beard concerning ways in which to pray for growing with the help of God.

Whose Side Are You On?

We stand at a major crossroads and the decisions surrounding our future direction is paramount. Whose side are you on?

Throughout history, the Church and society have often arrived at a place of confluence. The decisions that have been made have either helped or hampered both church and society for decades. We find ourselves on shaky unsettled territory as we try to navigate divergent views in an attempt to find *our way forward*.

The need for the light of hope and the healing help of the church has never been more pronounced or critical to addressing the requirements of our rapidly changing world. Simply put, the world needs the church now more than ever.

The problem is not that the church is powerless or ineffective, as has been alleged in some circles. The challenge facing The United Methodist Church is our inability to move forward in unity. We seem bent on choosing sides and selecting allies to help us "win" and we do so at the cost of losing a battle that is raging outside the doors and hallways of our stained-glass sanctuaries. Our society and our world are drifting toward destruction, while the church engaged in its own internal squabbles becomes less and less effectual.

The challenge of unity within the church is not new. Jesus prayed for the church's unity before the church was even born. I believe Jesus continues to intercede for His church. I strongly believe that Jesus cries for His church. He weeps over our dysfunction and our inability to stop carving his body into easily identifiable sides. Our failure to achieve unity renders the church powerless, weak and incapable of conquering the demons that plague our needy communities.

(Continued on Page 2)

The Holy Spirit gave birth to the church and has been given to sustain, nurture, and empower it for mission and ministry. All too often we strategize and scheme in an effort to get God's divine stamp of approval on "our side" while failing to yield all control to the One assigned to oversee, monitor and maintain its vitality. While we are busy choosing sides, darkness is allowed to reign in the world as the church continues in its own private self-sanctified fist fight.

Don't get me wrong, our issues surrounding human sexuality are important and they are vital to the future stability of our denomination. My fear, though, is that we are looking through the pre-enlightened eyes of Joshua and are failing, as he did, to ask the proper question.

"Whose side are you on?" Joshua raised that question as he tried to develop a strategy for conquering the land of promise. He stood at a crossroads and he faced serious challenges and obstacles. While Joshua was working *on a way forward*, he saw a soldier with a sword drawn (Joshua 5:13-15). Joshua asked the question, "Whose side are you on?"

The heavenly messenger was quick to point out to Joshua that he was not into choosing sides. The sword-drawn warrior was not present as a servant given to the highest bidder or to the best pray-ers.

GOD DOES NOT CHOOSE SIDES!

This theophany experience is the exact reminder we need in The United Methodist Church. God is not present to serve either side or the middle. God invites each of us to humility and a point of submission that produces a yielded-ness to God's agenda and not that of our own.

Joshua was encouraged to take off his shoes. I am afraid that as long as we keep insisting that we be allowed to keep our own shoes on, we will continue to demand that God should come over to our side and bless our way of thinking and behaving. Removing our shoes is a way of recognizing that there is indeed another way forward. Moving forward means turning the power and control over to the One to whom all authority belongs. The key to moving forward may be as simple as being willing to surrender and give up the need and desire to be in control.

The question for each of us is, "are we willing to kneel together at the feet of Jesus and surrender our desire to control the outcome?" We must also prayerfully ask Jesus to take charge of **His Church** and to direct its future as we recommit ourselves to being servants under His authority and command. As Joshua knelt down he had to lower his own sword. His vulnerability and willingness to yield and submit to a presence greater than his own opened the door for a radical encounter with God. Maybe it is time for each of us to give up our individual swords.

God provided *a way forward* only after Joshua recognized that the battle did not belong to him, but that he belonged to the one that refuses to take sides. The future unity of our denomination will depend upon our willingness to unite under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He alone is the head of the church and the Captain of our faith. Let us stop trying to make each other, or the Lord, submit and yield to "our side." Let us all humbly throw down our swords and surrender to the Lord of the Church and ask him to guide us in *a way forward*.

Bishop Frank J. Beard



One Service—January 29

Please be aware that on Sunday, January 29th we will have just one blended worship service at 10:00 am. This is a 5th Sunday, when we get a chance to worship with our friends who attend “the other” service normally. Take this opportunity to get reacquainted!

Catered Lunch—January 29

An All-Church Catered Lunch will be provided for us next Sunday, January 29th. This lunch will be furnished by Praise Community Fellowship as a way to say “thank you” to Immanuel. We hope you can stay for great food and fellowship!

Ash Wednesday

The season of Lent begins a bit late this year. It begins with Ash Wednesday on March 1st. We will have a special service that evening which will include the imposition of ashes.

Inclement Weather

If the wintry weather looks bad enough that you question whether or not we will be holding worship services, please go to our website, www.immanuelonmain.org. If services are cancelled, you will see that cancellation in big bold letters on the home page of our website. We will make phone calls to regular attenders who do not have access to the internet.

Kid's Night Out



All children ages 3 through those in 5th grade are invited to our next Kid's Night Out which will be held on Friday, February 10th. Please note that this event has been changed to the second Friday in February. Children will enjoy eating supper together and then participating in various activities and games. They end the evening watching a movie and munching on popcorn. You may make a reservation by signing up on the sheet in the Hospitality Room, or call the church office, 656-4648.

Yoga Class Resumes

Please join us on Sunday afternoons for some relaxation and refreshment. We will use breathing and assorted yoga poses to strengthen our minds and bodies and rejuvenate ourselves for the week ahead. This class will be appropriate for beginner to intermediate yoga students. Please bring a yoga mat. (A \$5 donation/class will be accepted but not expected.)

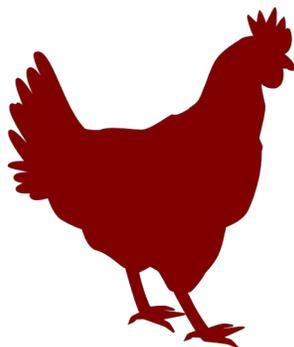
United Methodist Women

All women are welcome at our monthly UMW meetings. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 9th beginning at 12 noon in the Fellowship Hall. You may bring a sack lunch to eat. United Methodist Women (UMW) is a faith-based membership organization of laywomen within The United Methodist Church. UMW members are committed to growing as disciples of Jesus Christ in community with other women and advocating on behalf of women, children and youth around the world. United Methodist Women has been in mission for more than 140 years.



Youth Group Fundraiser

On Sunday, March 12, 2017, the Immanuel United Methodist Youth group will be offering an All-You-Care-to-Eat Fried Chicken Dinner. This will be held at the Edwardsville Moose Lodge #1561, 7371 Marine Road, Edwardsville. Dinner includes:



Fried Chicken
Mashed Potatoes & Gravy
Corn and Green Beans
Green Salad
Coffee, Tea, Water

Cost:

Adults \$9.00

Children (Age 5-12) \$4.00

Desserts will be sold separately, and carry outs will be available. Tickets are available from the youth, or you may purchase them that day at the door.

Proceeds will benefit the youth mission trip to New York in July, 2017.

Donations of nice cakes, pies, cookies or brownies to sell are needed. There is a sign-up sheet in the Hospitality Room. Some additional workers are also needed, and there is also a sign-up sheet for workers.

Thank you for your support of our youth!



OASIS

Studio Gaia is teaming up with **Action for a Better Tomorrow's Metro East Chapter** to support Oasis Women's Center in Alton. We are honored to offer our space as a drop-off point for donations. Anything you can bring is greatly appreciated, but here is a list of specific items Oasis has requested:

- Blankets (twin & full) Oasis requests white only
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Body wash
- Dove/Ivory bar soap
- Combs/brushes
- African American hair products
- Body lotion
- Tampons/sanitary napkins
- Band Aids

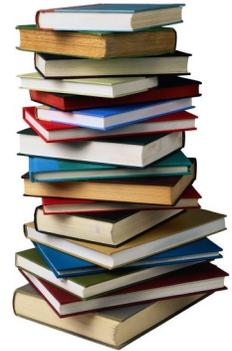
Specific to children:

- Sleepwear
- Baby blankets
- Teething rings/pacifiers
- Baby wipes
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Barrettes

You may place your donations in the box located in our Hospitality Room. Thank you!

Spring Book Sale

If you do some early Spring Cleaning, we are accepting donations of gently used books for the Spring Book Sale. All kinds of books are accepted: fiction, non-fiction, cook books, children's books, travel, etc.



Greeters Needed

We are in need of volunteers to greet people as they arrive at church on Sunday mornings. If we can get a few more Greeters for each worship service, then you will each Greet once every two months. Please contact Anita in the church office if you feel like this is something that you would like to do. The phone number is (618) 656-4648, or you can e-mail anita@immanuelonmain.org.

Pictorial Directory Update

We are still trying to compile the information we need for the Roster of our new church directory. If you did not have your picture taken for the directory, please pick up a green sheet from the narthex or Hospitality Room, fill it out and place it in the offering plate or on the secretary's desk in the church office. We need to know if you have dropped your land line, if you want to have one or two phone numbers published, and if you want your e-mail address published. You may still submit a photo for publication in the directory. Only people who were photographed or who submit photos will receive a copy of this directory. There will be a copy available online to everyone else. We want our roster to be as accurate as possible, so we are counting on everyone to help out. We need the information ASAP. Thanks!

Trivia Night Fundraiser

Gather your friends and relatives along with your colleagues and come out for a night of fun at the Metro Area Professional Organization's Trivia Night to be held on Friday, February 3, beginning at 6:30 pm at the SWIC Common Area, 4950 Maryville Road in Granite City, Illinois. \$15/person, 8 to a table. BYO snacks, no alcoholic beverages, soft drinks provided. A Silent Auction will also be a part of the evening's agenda.

Valentine's Tea for Two

The Great Rivers Choral Society is hosting a Valentine's Tea for Two Fundraiser on Sunday, February 12 from 1—3 pm in the lower level of the Evangelical United Church of Christ, 1212 W. Home M. Adams Parkway in Godfrey, Illinois. Ticket prices are \$35 per couple, \$20 per person, and \$10 per child (age 3-10). The afternoon will include lite fare, desserts, song, and fellowship. For tickets call 618-401-1450. Ticket sales are limited to 120—get yours soon!

Prayer Ministry (+ Indicates weeks—call office to continue)

- + Deloris Fisher, recovering from heart surgery this week
Eloise Allen, who pulled her LCL and will miss the rest of the basketball season
Alexis Tharp, recovering from successful surgery to remove an aneurism
Mary Knapp, health issues
- ++ David Fellhauer, recovering from injuries sustained in a car accident
Carol Mestemacher, undergoing treatment for cancer
Collin Rives, continued treatment for cancer
- ++++ Ron Jones, father of Rhonda Grammer, health concerns
Peggy Worthey and family on the passing of her sister, Joyce
Lorman Reckmann on the death of his daughter on Christmas Eve—he is a Free Lunch
Friday friend and cousin to the Koenig family
Kathy Bryant, praise report: she has received good results

2016 Contribution Statements

You may pick up your 2016 Contribution Statement from the table in the Hospitality Room. Thank you for your support of the ministries of Immanuel in 2016!



2017 Contributions

Boxed contribution envelopes are available to pick up in the narthex. If you would like to have a boxed set of envelopes but one has not been prepared for you, please contact the office, and we will be happy to fix one up for you. Anyone who had numbers between 257 and 265 in 2016 have been assigned a new number this year, since we ordered fewer sets of envelopes for this year.

If you do not use boxed envelopes but would like to know what number to write on your checks, you may look up your name on the sheets that are laying by the boxed contribution sets. It is helpful for us if you use that number on your checks or pew envelopes so we can track your giving correctly.

If you are giving to a fund other than Current Expense, please make that information clear on whatever envelope you use.



Receipts to 12/31/2016

	January	February	March	April
Contrib.	\$14,605.00	\$11,923.00	\$10,642.50	\$11,435.36
Online	1,590.00	2,085.00	1,640.00	1,640.00
Other	<u>4,294.76</u>	<u>1,594.16</u>	<u>3,306.05</u>	<u>1,945.92</u>
	\$20,489.76	15,602.16	\$15,588.55	\$15,021.28
	May	June	July	August
Contrib.	\$14,510.01	\$12,511.38	\$ 9,559.19	\$11,532.35
Online	1,640.00	1,665.00	1,690.00	2,160.00
Other	<u>3,567.85</u>	<u>2,797.37</u>	<u>2,754.06</u>	<u>2,730.85</u>
	\$15,648.49	\$18,446.60	\$19,717.86	\$16,973.75
	September	October	November	December
Contrib.	\$ 9,341.50	\$11,963.85	\$11,963.85	\$13,493.80
Online	1,690.00	1,738.00	1,738.00	1,738.00
Other	<u>1,418.99</u>	<u>5,117.67</u>	<u>5,117.67</u>	<u>7,906.49</u>
	\$18,819.52	\$12,450.49	\$18,819.52	\$25,138.29

Total needed per month to meet the budget
and pay all of our Apportionments
\$17,269.00

Scrip Fundraiser

We have a great fundraising program in place at Immanuel called "Scrip". You purchase gift cards to hundreds of local merchants which you use when you visit their locations. The gift cards are also a great gift or thank-you to a special person. You pay the face value of the card, but Immanuel receives a percentage of what you spend. The various merchants give different percentages back—between 2% and up to 16%!! You can pick up an informational packet in the Hospitality Room, along with an order form. Orders will be collected this Sunday, January 29th, as well as every last Sunday of each month. Thanks for using Scrip for your purchases!



**IMMANUEL UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

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Edwardsville, IL 62025

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Fax: 618-656-1162
E-mail: anita@immanuelonmain.org

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

We seek to be God's people in attitude and action as we:

Experience and Share God's grace joyfully,

Live and Teach God's Word faithfully,

Accept and Serve God's people lovingly.

You are invited to join us in this mission ...

CONTACT US!

Office: (618) 656-4648
Fax: (618) 656-1162

Web Site:
www.immanuelonmain.org

Church E-mail:
anita@immanuelonmain.org

Pastor's E-mail:
pastorjackie@immanuelonmain.org

Look us up on Facebook

Reverend Jackie Havis-Shear
Cell Phone: (618) 531-9134

Maurice "Butch" Mestemacher
Instrument Director

David Bryant
Choral Director

Jordan Grammer
Contemporary Worship Leader
Director of Congregational
Development



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Joint Contemporary Service

8:45 a.m.
In Sanctuary

Common Time

9:45 a.m.
Includes:
Sunday School
Middle School Study
Wired Word Discussions
Seekers Class
Coffee + More
Choir Rehearsal

Traditional Service

10:45 a.m.
In Sanctuary

5th Sunday Schedule:

9:00 am Common Time
10:00 am Blended Worship

**Nursery Available All
Morning**