

# Immanuel United Church of Christ

339 E. Louisa St.

P.O. Box 87

Darlington, WI 53530

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
NOVEMBER 2021 Newsletter

Interim Pastor Brad Brookins

608-776-4110 Office

E-Mail – [immanuelucc@centurytel.net](mailto:immanuelucc@centurytel.net)



November, 2021

Here's some good Covid news, along with your plea and reminder for November. And then something even more pleasant:

The good news is that, on a nationwide basis, all the numbers are heading in the right direction. Covid cases, hospitalizations and deaths are all trending down. For this we can be very grateful and we can hope the trend continues into the winter as the weather turns cold and we spend a lot more time indoors.

Of course, we are not yet out of the pandemic woods. Only a little over half (58%) of Wisconsinites are fully vaccinated. This leaves a lot of room for future outbreaks to occur or, even worse, for new Covid variants to arise that could undo all the hard work we've put in so far. In Lafayette County the Covid case rate has been bouncing around over the past few weeks but, as of this writing (October 26) it is back up to 240. The CDC ranks any case load over 100 as a high transmission community and strongly recommends the wearing of masks by all of us, vaccinated or not, when we are in groups indoors.

This includes, of course, complying with the Council decision requiring everyone to wear a mask in the sanctuary during our worship service, unless you have a clear medical reason not to. If you are among the great majority following this directive Thank You, Thank You, Thank You. If you are not complying, or the mask is the only thing keeping you from joining in the worship service, please, for your sake and for the church, give this a second thought.

So my plea: if you haven't yet been vaccinated, get your shots as soon as you can. If you have friends or family who are resisting the vaccine encourage them as lovingly as you can to get it done. The Covid vaccines are safe—way safer than getting the disease, and they are effective. And, most importantly, they are the best way we have, in the midst of a deadly pandemic, to follow in the way of Jesus (*"Love God with all your heart, soul and mind and love your neighbor as yourself"* Matthew 22: 35-40) and to learn from the teaching of St Paul (*"Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?"* 1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

No doubt there are people who think I'm being a bit of a nag by giving out these updates and reminders. You may have noticed that doesn't really bother me. My job, to the best of my ability, is to always speak the truth (as I see it, at least) and to call all of us, myself very much included, to a more faithful walk in the way of Jesus. As long as I have breath (and you want to keep paying me ☺ ) that's what I intend to do.

And now for that more pleasant thing I mentioned above—

Here's a poem I wrote a few years ago about the importance of holding tight to the people you love most, and the unfortunate consequences of failing to do so. I learned this lesson (not for the first or last time) when my little daughter's hand slipped from mine as we descended a rocky path.



## **Pathways**

Brad Brookins

There is a stumbling stone path to a red granite ledge  
overlooking my favorite lake. Her rock-hewn stairway,  
irregular in rise and tread, taunts lungs and legs,  
teasing you—"You'll never get there!" she says.  
But when you do get there, and look down hundreds of feet  
into the other sky, deep in its own blueness, framed  
with pine, birch and sandy beach, almost  
you forget the weariness in your limbs.

The down path is another story.  
Fewer stairs but more turns, an unreliable incline.  
And if you aren't careful, if you don't hold  
your little girls' hand tightly enough she will  
slip away. Her knee will find the painful edge  
where blood will flow and a cry arise,  
"Daddy let go of my hand!"  
And once again you will have disrupted the universe.  
By letting go.

Fail to hold secure what you love  
and what you love will slip from your grasp.  
I know this is true. I don't know always what a prayer is,  
either in the speaking or the hearing. But I would pray  
to hold on; to never too soon or too easily let go. I would pray  
for a clasp of hands and hearts that life will smile on,  
and death respect. I would pray  
to never walk the path alone.



## CHURCH COUNCIL

The October Church Council meeting was held on October 20, 2021.

Members Present: JoAnn Geissbuhler, Roy Hardt, Fritz Hirsbrunner, Brandi Ruf-Wepking, Sheila Siegler, Jean Stauffacher, Dave Sutherland, and Matt Ubersox. Guest Speaker Rev. Andrew Warner-UCC Investments. Endowment Committee Member Kerry Black and Treasurer Betsy Wiegel.

The Council approved the Minutes from the September meeting as presented. The Council approved the Financial Report as printed.

### REPORTS:

- A. **Pastor's Report:** Highlighted current condition of Covid within our state. Will discuss with worship committee Covid updates as well as ideas for worship services. Council supports online worship during the winter months when the roads are too dangerous for travel. The president of the Council will make the determination and communication will be via D99.3 radio station, email and Facebook.
- B. **President's report:** Roy Berrey will lead the November meeting due to JoAnn having knee surgery. Salvation Army reached out for Bell Ringers for Thanksgiving weekend. Members can reach out to Marjean Sutherland to sign up.
- C. **Christian Education:** The Council approved having "Trunk or Treat" in the church parking lot immediately following the church service on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. Children are encouraged to wear their costume to church. Brandi will work on something special for Thanksgiving and Christmas to include children.
- D. **Building and Grounds:** Fritz asked Randy and Matt to update "working spreadsheet" for church projects to present for Annual Meeting.
- E. **Mission Team:** Thank you notes were sent to those who helped with the Apple Pie day.
- F. **Stewardship Committee:** Annual stewardship letter is complete and will go out to membership in November. Free chili supper will be Wednesday, October 27 from 4:30 until food is gone.
- G. **Women's Guild:** Looking at possibly planning a Christmas party for Guild.

### OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Strategic Planning:** Update on proposed by-law changes presented.
- B. **Search Committee:** A few profiles sent for review are unfortunately no longer available. The search continues.
- C. **Nominating Committee:** Brandi Ruf-Wepking, Dave Sutherland and Kate Black were appointed by the Council to serve on the Nominating Committee.
- D. **Flag in Church:** Tabled until next meeting.

### NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Investments:** Rev. Andrew Warner discussed with council investment option within the UCC Church organization. Kerry Black gave investment counsel and suggestions to the

Council including reaching out to local advisors. Fritz will reach out to Kim Havens and arrange for a meeting with the Council. Council will consider options for funds currently invested.

The next Council meeting will be November 17th at 6:15 p.m.

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#### **DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS**

Daylight Savings Time ends November 7<sup>th</sup>. Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

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#### **Women's Guild Christmas Party**

The guild will be having a Christmas Party this year. It will be December 9th at 12:00. The gathering will be potluck, please bring a small dish to pass or a dessert. Debbie Loken will be providing a meatloaf and Connie

Ubersox will provide Ham Sandwiches. Please bring a small new or gently used item as we will be playing a game which requires a gift item. We may also play bingo if time permits. We hope to see everyone there to kick off the start of our Christmas Season.

Also, a reminder that we are doing a monetary cash drive for the Women's Guild in lieu of the Cookie Bazaar. The envelopes will be in the December newsletter and we hope everyone will participate if they are able.

Thank you

Debbie Loken  
Guild President

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### **PASTORAL CARE**

If you know of any church member that would appreciate a pastoral visit, please let Janice Ruf know and she will follow up with the contact, or contact Pastor Brad Brookins at 608-669-2926.

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### **MAKING CONTRIBUTIONS ONLINE?**

Immanuel United Church of Christ is now able to offer the option of online giving. This is done through our Churchtrac program. There are three options to give: Credit/Debit card, ACH/Checking, and SMS/Text giving. There is a small cost to IUCC to be able to do this but it is minimal. The most cost effective way to give online is to do the ACH/Checking option. The cost for IUCC is only \$.25 a transaction. Credit/Debit card has a cost of 2.2% plus 30 cents for each transaction. SMS/Text giving utilizes a

credit/debit card so the cost would be the same. You will be credited for your full donation and IUCC will pay the fee to the company.

If you are logged into Churchtrac (<https://iucc.churchtrac.com/>), the donation will go directly into your account. You are able to select different categories you would like your donation to go to. For example, \$200 donation - \$180 to General Operations and \$20 to OCWM. The money gets directly deposited into the Church bank account. The company Churchtrac uses for this is Stripe and our account is all set up with them. They receive the fee for their service through the transactions that are completed. The transaction will show up on your account as Immanuel UCC. There is a step by step process help guide that can be accessed by clicking the link at the top of the e-mail that was previously sent to you, or the link on our website.

If you already have or would prefer to have your bank send your donation to the Church via check, that option has not changed.

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**Happy  
Thanksgiving Day**



**Wishing all of you a happy, healthy  
and safe Thanksgiving!**

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

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**Nov. 7** – Daylight Savings Time ends. Turn your clocks back 1 hour on November 6th.

**Nov. 17** – Church Council Meeting at 6:15 p.m.

**Nov. 22** – Deadline for December newsletter articles

**Dec. 9** – Women's Guild Christmas Party at noon. Bring dish to pass and a gift item.



### NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1st Diane Bredeson

6th Sloan Glendenning  
Bernie Ruf  
8th Roy Berrey  
10th Leta Hirsbrunner  
Don Ruf  
11th Sheila Berrey  
Marian Paynter  
15th Randy Huntington  
Brett Jenson  
Trace Jenson  
Jean Stauffacher  
22nd Madison Reilly  
23rd Bruce Geissbuhler  
Larry Salathe  
24th Randy Ubersox  
28th Betty Merriam  
30th Tucker Lewin



### NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

1st Chuck & Joanie Keister  
Alan & Janice Ruf  
16th Joan & Ron Blaser



### NOVEMBER LITURGISTS

7th Tana Risseeuw  
14th Marjean Sutherland  
21st Janice Ruf  
28th Joan Blaser



Deadline for the December newsletter articles is **November 22, 2021.**



# Just for KIDS



## Special Times for the Israelites

*"This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it ..." Exodus 12:14*

The biblical calendar had many feasts and festivals. They were connected with the changing of the seasons or special events. Below are some of the special days observed by the Israelites.

Use the code to find the name of the special day and the month of the Jewish year in which they are celebrated.

### CODE:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
ZYXWVUTSRQPONMLKJIHGFE DCBA

Season		Holiday	Month
1. End of Summer	ILHS SZHSZMZS	(New Year)	GRSHIR
2. Fall	BLN PRKKFI	(Day of Atonement)	GRSHIR
3. Fall	HFPPLGS	(Festival of Booths)	GRHSIR
4. Winter	SZMFPPZS	(Festival of Rededication)	PRHOVE
5. Winter	KFIRN	(Festival of Lots)	ZWZI
6. Spring	KZHHLEVI	(Feast of Unleavened Bread)	MRHZM
7. Spring	HSZEF'LG	(Feast of Weeks/ Pentecost)	HREZM