

Immanuel United Church of Christ

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 2024 Newsletter

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Why the Smartest Among Us Do the Dumbest Things

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” – Mark 8:34b-38

Steven Hawking was born in Oxford, England in early 1942 and went on to his reward on March 14, 2018. He was laid to rest on Saturday, March 31, 2018, in Cambridge, England. Private services were held for him at the university’s church, Mary the Great. Many people offered their tributes and praises of him. Even the Queen of England sent her respects for the passing of such a great human being.

As an interesting bit of trivia, Stephen Hawking was born on January 8, 1942. This is 300 years, to the day, after the death of the father of modern science, Galileo Galilei. And similarly, he died precisely on the 139th anniversary of the birth of Albert Einstein.

Stephen Hawking began his research on cosmology at Cambridge in 1962. One year later, he was diagnosed with ALS. It was not long until he would be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. Even so, in 1965, from that chair, he would gain his PhD in the study of an expanding universe.

For 76 years of human life, Stephen Hawking’s name became known world-wide. His accomplishments were such that he was appointed Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge, a post held by Sir Isaac Newton. Prof. Hawking’s ashes will be interred in Westminster Abbey, next to Isaac Newton’s. Perhaps best known for using Albert Einstein’s general theory of relativity to “mathematically” walk time back to the point of the “BIG BANG”.

All these wonderful and amazing accomplishments for one person spending most of his adult life with such a debilitating horror as ALS. I cannot imagine living with such a mind as his, fully intact while his body continually deteriorates. With everything he had to suffer and endure, few can say that he was not a great human being. Our world is a far better place because Stephen Hawking was in it.

Even so, he has said some very troubling things about his doubts and disbelief of God’s existence. He is not alone on this denial of our Creator God.

I pray for Stephen Hawking and all those other people who live and die without God. No matter their accomplishments in this world, eternally, they are lost souls.

Believers, at the end of our lives, we know that we have a place in a glory-filled eternity in heaven. Jesus promised us that much. What does the non-believer have? Anything?

I pray for Stephen Hawking because our understanding of God’s creation, the cosmos, has been tremendously enhanced because of his work from his chair. Because of him, human

understanding of the heavens has been increased.

And, just as we humans have benefited because of Dr. Stephen Hawking, the wonders of heaven would be an even better place if Stephen were there.

For what is the value of a person's life and everything that person did in their life, if they lose it all because they cannot find God?

Amen.

Rev. Bob Wilkins



CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council met on January 17, 2024. Members present at the meeting were: Roy Berrey, Fritz Hirsbrunner, Brandi Ruf-Wepking, Sheila Siegler, Nancy Slama, Connie Ubersox, Pastor Bob Wilkins. Absent: Jordan Hinderman, Dave Sutherland, Kerry Black.

The Council approved the December 2023 minutes with a correction of the Geissbuhler donation for shrubs being removed. It was not the Geissbuhler family.

Reports:

Financial report - was approved as presented.

Pastor's Report – A paper copy was given by Pastor.

President's Report –

1. Mail – Christmas fund solicitation received; we already gave a gift.
2. Final Thoughts on Annual Meeting and Thank You's. Discussed Annual Council Meeting to elect officers after the Annual Meeting.

Christian Education Committee – Brandi's last meeting for council is tonight. Sunday School is still going the same.

Building and Grounds Committee –

1. Parsonage Fireplace Cleaning – Remove from the agenda. Pastor will follow up at some point in the future.
2. Lifeline with Lindell Donation – update on purchases. The work has begun and progressing.

Mission Team – \$18,310.40 in fund. The team will make donations to various organizations; a planned clothing drive is in the works.

Endowment Committee – meets next week with Thrivent reps.

Pastor-Parish Committee – Betsy Wiegel, Marjean Sutherland, Fritz Hirsbrunner, and Pastor met tonight.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

The next Council meeting will be Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 6:15 p.m.



WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The congregation and worship committee wish to thank all those who provided special music for Christmas Eve. And, to those of you who attended and joined in the celebration of Jesus' birth. We all have fond memories of past Christmas Eve's and hope you added

this one to your list. It was also special because Pastor Bob and Donna are now a part of the Immanuel family.

Speaking of special music, anyone and everyone in the congregation is welcome to share any talents with the rest of the congregation during services. The congregation appreciates those contributions. Let Pastor Bob, Cindy, or Roy know when you can provide musical inspiration.

Lent and Easter are early this year, so Ash Wednesday is just around the corner. Plan on attending the Ash Wednesday service and we will let the congregation know what other Lenten events are planned.

Worship Committee

Pastor Bob Wilkins
Cindy Pluemer
Roy Berrey



PASTORAL CARE

If you know of any church member that would appreciate a pastoral visit, please let Pastor Bob Wilkins know and he will follow up with the contact. You can contact Pastor Wilkins at 812-691-0907, or at 608-776-4110.



December 2023 Financial Information

	December 2023	Budget	Year to Date 2023	Year to Date Budget
Contributions/Other Revenue	\$ 21,497	\$ 8,589	\$105,538	\$ 91,700
Expenses	<u>\$ 17,735</u>	<u>\$10,130</u>	<u>\$ 79,462</u>	<u>\$ 91,067</u>
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$ 3,762	\$ (1,541)	\$ 26,076	\$ 633



UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 7 – Evening Prayer/Bible Study group at 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 14 – Ash Wednesday Service at 6:30 p.m.

Evening Prayer/Bible Study group at 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 21 – Church Council meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Feb. 26 – Deadline for March newsletter articles

Feb. 28 – Evening Prayer/Bible Study group at 7:00 p.m.

What is the price of a person's soul?

N F W S W S S P T H S A V
 R G O O D D E N I A G O P
 ' U R L I M S A V E O H X
 L L D A O L U F N I S T '
 D I S C I P L E S V P A Y
 A D U L T E R O U S E K A
 S E X C H A N G E I L E W
 H N F A T H E R ' S F V P
 A Y L I W I M M S I F I '
 M L O H A D E L L A C G H
 E N O Y N A W F O L L O W
 D L L E T F H O R O O L R
 E O H R S F E C R O S S U
 H T E O A V N Y ' C F O E

ADULTEROUS	ANYONE	ASHAMED
CALLED	COME	CROSS
CROWD	DENY	DISCIPLES
EXCHANGE	FATHER'S	FOLLOW
FORFEIT	GAIN	GENERATION
GIVE	GLORY	GOOD
GOSPEL	HOLY	LIFE
LOSE	SAID	SAVE
SINFUL	SOUL	TAKE
THEN	WANTS	WHEN
WHOLE	WORDS	WORLD

Then he **called** the **crowd** to him along with his **disciples** and **said**: “If **anyone** would **come** after me, he must **deny** himself and **take** up his **cross** and **follow** me. For whoever **wants** to **save** his **life** will **lose** it, but whoever **loses** his **life** for me and for the **gospel** will **save** it. What **good** is it for a man to **gain** the **whole world**, yet **forfeit** his **soul**? Or what can a man **give** in **exchange** for his **soul**? If **anyone** is **ashamed** of me and my **words** in this **adulterous** and **sinful generation**, the Son of Man will be **ashamed** of him **when** he **comes** in his **Father's glory** with the **holy** angels.” (Created with Logos© Bible Software.)



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

3 rd	Dick Ward
6 th	Nicole Lewin
8 th	Orvin Siegenthaler
10 th	Stu Soper
	Don Rolli
11 th	Colton Buss
14 th	Heidi Rear
15 th	Dean Monson
17 th	Taylor Reuter
20 th	Matt Ubersox
21 st	JoAnn Geissbuhler
	Jerry Hancock
	Michael Kendall
22 nd	Chuck Keister
	Linda Connolly
24 th	Deana Soper
27 th	Dustin Wepking
28 th	Travis Lewin



FEBRUARY LITURGISTS

4 th	Debbie Loken
11 th	Pam Hardt
18 th	Roy Berrey
25 th	Nancy Slama



Deadline for the
February
newsletter
articles is
**February 26,
2024.**



FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

8 th	Cindy & Paul Pluemer
14 th	Christa & Dean Jenson
20 th	Orvin & Ruth Siegenthaler