

Immanuel United Church of Christ

339 E. Louisa St.

P.O. Box 87

Darlington, WI 53530

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

OCTOBER 2025 Newsletter

Rev. Dana Caldwell

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October 2025

First Days

I want to thank all of you for welcoming me warmly, and those who provided the extra touches, like a blanket to use the first time, stocking tissue, toilet paper, paper towels, the greeting gift of popcorn, a pumpkin for the front door, fresh veggies from the garden, cheese, chili and crackers and more. Those who helped with lifting, carrying, going upstairs and downstairs with broken down boxes, help building a bookshelf and installing adapters for 2-3 prong plugs. I am sure I have forgotten to mention something, but every act helped me feel welcome and to settle in. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

Thank you also for your feedback from making communion feel special again, "I needed that", I like how you make us feel, I like to feel during a service. While smiling, "you hit me in my pocketbook" comments of that was a good service, especially with my adjusting to the order of worship.

Thank you for your hospitality as I have been able to visit a couple of people in their home. I appreciated the conversations we have had and will continue to have in the future. I appreciate the phone conversations and people sharing with me that they would like me to visit. I am looking forward to those I have not yet scheduled but will soon.

Thank you to those who have answered my many questions and those who have asked clarifying questions in return. Thanks for running stairs at church for me and your physical help with things I am unable to do. Thanks to all of you who care about Poppy, as she is my family.

Peace and Grace to you all,

Dana

Office Hours (see change)

Tuesdays will be from 10 am to 3 pm. (Please note the change.) I will always be available per phone or text 919-523-8187 and email at dana.l.caldwell@gmail.com and we can set a time outside office hours to meet if your schedule does not allow you to meet within office hours.

Sundays Before the Service

Please be aware that I -Pastor Dana, will be very focused on greeting people as I am able and thinking about the service or confirmation class during the Sunday School hour. If you have anything you want me to remember after the service, there will be sticky notes available on my desk for your use to drop me a note and I will respond on Monday. If the information is more urgent please feel free to text me @ 919-523-8187 or email me dana.l.caldwell@gmail.com and I will respond as quickly as I can after the service, later that day or Monday.

In Case of an Emergency

If there is an emergency, and someone has to go to the hospital or a Doctor's appointment that is concerning, or other family emergency or a change in health status, please be sure to let me know or instruct a family member to let me know via phone call or text at 919-523-8187. So that I am aware and able to be present as soon as possible if my presence would be helpful to you or your loved ones. It might be good to add me as a contact in your phone.

Visitation

If you have information about your loved one you would like me to know before I go to visit them the first time or for any follow up visits, please feel free to speak with me *after* a service, via an appointment, via phone or text or dropping by during office hours. It might be a good idea to add me as a contact in your phone. Pastor Dana Caldwell, 919-523-8187, and/or dana.l.caldwell@gmail.com.

TAKING RISKS

I present for your reflection and thought this piece on *Risks by Janet Rand*. I hope you find both encouragement and challenge as you reflect and you may find much more. I would love to have a conversation about it.

Risks

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.

To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.

To reach out for another is to risk involvement.

To expose feelings is to risk exposing your true self.

To place your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss.

To love is to risk not being loved in return.

To live is to risk dying, to hope is to risk despair,

To try is to risk failure.

But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.

The person who risks nothing, does nothing, had nothing, and is nothing.

They may avoid suffering and sorrow but if they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, live.

Only a person who risks is free.

Many years ago, I came across this piece and reflecting on it helped me, affirm myself and encouraged me to be okay with the risks I took naturally- like laughing, weeping, reaching out, exposing feelings, sharing ideas freely, daring to dream big. I understand the risk that not everyone will agree with me or even like me. I also see the risks we are asked/called to take as we become more like Christ on our faith journey. Life is hard and there are many challenges and experiences that form us. The elements of this piece seem to give me, at least, a way to respond to hardships, people, and situations that call for a choice to move in one direction or the other. A choice that involves staying true to myself and the building of my character.

I take the risk of sharing this with you, I wonder what you think about it, how do you view it, how does it relate to you and your journey with Christ, what risks have you had to take? What risks will we as a church have to take to grow in these days?



PASTORAL CARE

If you know of any church member that would appreciate a pastoral visit, please let Pastor Dana Caldwell know and she will follow up with the contact. You can contact Pastor Caldwell at the church by calling 608-776-4110. The quickest way to contact Pastor Caldwell is by calling her cell

phone at 919-523-8187, or by emailing her at dana.l.caldwell@gmail.com.



CHURCH COUNCIL

The September Church Council meeting was held on September 10, 2025.

Members Present: Phil Risseeuw, Kerry Black, Jordan Hinderman, Fritz Hirsbrunner, Sheila Siegler, Nancy Slama, Dave Sutherland, Connie Ubersox, Pastor Dana Caldwell, and Pam Hardt. Guest: Betsy Wiegel.

The Council approved the minutes from the last meeting as presented.

Financial Report: financial report for September was approved as presented.

Pastors Report. Dana is wondering about a cross placed between the two windows of the hallway between sanctuary and fellowship hall on the outside of the building. We will explore this more. Dana is settling in and unpacking. She will be making calls this next week on folks shut in.

President's Report. We have been approached to ring our church bell on Sept. 17th which is the day our constitution was signed. Phil advised the courthouse can ring their bell, we should not need to do this. Dana mentioned updating the church directory and how we could accomplish this. A notice will put in the October newsletter for folks to submit an updated picture if they choose to and update members and contact information. This is housed on ChurcTrac, Nancy and Sheila offered to help Dana with this update.

Christian Education Committee- update given below.

Rally Day – September 14

Confirmation Update – confirmation will begin on Sunday, Sept. 14th at 9 am with 4 kids attending. Pastor Dana and Sheila will be leading the class.

Building & Grounds Committee -

Steeple Repairs – The Council approved the steeple repairs at a cost of \$27,890.00 for the submitted repairs needed due to structural and outer defects.

Mission Team - Apple pie day is set for October 25th, shooting for 700 orders, \$12 each, try to get money up front for pies when taking orders.

Stewardship Committee - Sheila reports she and Pastor are attending a Stewardship Course online for 6 weeks, more to come.

EF&G Committee – nothing at this time.

Endowment Committee - nothing at this time.

Finance Committee - Fritz gave update on Thrivent monies, excluding the endowment. The Council approved that anything requiring funds of \$5,000 or more be submitted with multiple quotes if feasible to the Finance Committee and they will review, approve and present to the Council. Discussed the church treasurers cash counting utilizing two financial secretaries, this has been working well. The Council approved the financial secretaries providing a copy of the cash verification form monthly to the Finance Committee.

Pastor-Parish Committee - meeting set up for Sept. 23rd.

Search Committee – will be removed from the agenda next month.

Women's Guild - meeting has been postponed until the 17th.

Worship Committee - nothing at this time.

Old Business

Thrift Store Update – business plan changes were given to Council members. The plumber came to look at removing the two toilets and urinal, grant is almost ready to submit, Dana is working on a recommendation letter from the Council. Fritz suggested a

change to Article 4 of the business plan. Pam will make the changes. The Council is requesting the operational plan for the Thrift Store. We have this and will present to the Council at the October meeting. Pam will make an announcement on Sunday formally letting the congregation know about the Thrift Store and it's progress.

RBS Shirts – The Council reviewed 2 logos Pam had drawn up. The Council approved the logo #2 to be printed on shirts from RBS which church members can purchase on their own. A notice will be put in the October newsletter to congregants advising of the ability to purchase shirts.

Handicap Parking Spots Update – Dan Riley said they will get the parking spot locations fixed.

New Business

Church Basement Windows – Estimate to replace them. We will get another bid. Sheila will reach out to Danny Lange. We will present at next council if possible.

Retired Communion Ware – What to do with it? The Council approved trying to see if we can find someone to donate this to. The Apple Grove church that was destroyed was suggested as a possibility.

The next Council meeting will be October 8th at 6:15 p.m.



3rd Annual Chili Supper/Bake Sate

Since the fall weather is upon us, why not invite your friends to the Immanuel United Church of Christ's Chili Supper and Bake Sale on November 12th. The supper will begin at 4:30 p.m. The bake sale will start at 3:30 p.m.



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Janice's class have been reviewing what they learned last year. They have also been talking about obeying Jesus and what the bible tells them to do. They talked about doing good in school, home and with friends.

Joan's class is watching a short video each week and then having a discussion. So far, we have gone over Adam & Eve and Noah and the Ark.



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THRIFT STORE UPDATE

The thrift store is starting to take shape. We are finishing up cleaning and will be painting and doing some small plumbing projects. We will have free items in the fellowship hall the next two Sundays for people to take. If you are considering taking items to Good Will, please consider holding on to those items for a few more months and give them to our thrift store. Stay tuned for further updates on when we will be taking donations and asking

for volunteers.

Sheila Siegler, Connie Ubersox, Marjean Sutherland, Pam Hardt & Pastor Dana Caldwell
Thrift Store Committee



WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS

At our September meeting it was voted on and approved to donate \$500.00 to the Steeple fund and also for the treasurer to get a credit card for Women's Guild so it will be easier to purchase items needed by the guild. The guild will still have a charge account at the Piggly Wiggly for miscellaneous items.

There will be no meeting in October or November and our December Christmas Party will be held on the 10th at noon. It will be potluck and the meat will be provided by the guild. A \$5-10 exchangeable gift can be brought by anyone who wants to participate in our gift exchange.

We will be having our 3rd annual Chili supper/bake sale on November 12th. The bake sale will begin at 3:30 p.m. and the supper will begin at 4:30 p.m. We will be offering carry outs for people who are unable to attend the supper.

Also, I would like to thank Jared Reuter for the wonderful talk he gave on Alcoholic Anonymous. All of us learned a lot about the program and how important it is for the recovery process for people who struggle with this addiction.

Debbie Loken
Guild President



Monthly Financial Information

	August	Budget	Year to Date 2025	Year to Date Budget
Contributions/Other Revenue	\$ 3,771	\$10,111	\$ 71,360	\$ 60,891
Expenses *	<u>\$ 14,801</u>	<u>\$ 3,839</u>	<u>\$ 200,663</u>	<u>\$ 46,195</u>
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$(11,031)	\$ 6,272	\$(129,303)	\$ 14,696

- The down payment for the window restoration project was paid out of the General Fund (\$73,504)
 - New AV equipment and bell tower control unit paid out of the General Fund (\$11,170)
 - \$60,000 withdrawn from General Fund and invested in a CD
 - YTD Receipts reflect additional \$7,000 from Blankenhorn Trust
-



In the letter to the Galatians, Paul encourages the church to “carry each other’s burdens.” This seems to be a clear enough encouragement. Why then, does he also say just a few verses later, “for each one should carry their own load?” This scripture highlights a dynamic many of us face when we help others or receive help. There’s a difference between helping someone and taking over for them. Inversely, it can be both challenging and a source of comfort to receive care. Giving and receiving, with autonomy, is an integral part of justice ministries.

When the United Church of Christ gathers to collect the Neighbors in Need offering, we work to honor this complexity. The money collected supports the work of the UCC’s Washington D.C. Office for Public Policy and Advocacy. The advocacy done in this office can be on behalf of churches, but most of the time, it involves partnership with congregations and church members across the nation. The work is shared through collective advocacy, with and for one another.

Contributing to this offering allows us to share one another’s burdens. Two-thirds of your donation supports the UCC’s justice and witness ministries, such as the D.C. Office. The remaining one-third supports the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM), which has been witnessing to Native values and culture as a vital part of the UCC since 1971.

This offering will be collected from September 21st - October 5th. Please look for more information in the bulletins and envelopes will be provided in the pews. Thank you for your gifts as we work together, sharing our burdens to support our Neighbors in Need.



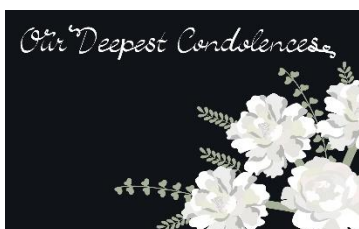
As many of you know, our beautiful church steeple was struck by lightning during a mid-September thunderstorm. The exterior damage is visible from the street and we are thankful the damage was not more destructive.

Krause Konstruktion of Coon Valley performed an on-site inspection of the damage and found there are additional repairs needed aside from the lightning strike damage. They found a beam that has moisture damage so it needs to be replaced, and are suggesting the spires and cross be scraped, repaired, and painted to help preserve the structure and prevent further water damage to the interior.

Krause prepared two bids, one for repairing the lightning strike damage and the other for repairing the beam, spires, and cross. Immanuel's insurance company agreed to cover 100% of the cost of the repairs related to the lightning strike and for that, we are very grateful. But IUCC needs to cover the cost of replacing the beam and the repair of the spires and cross, and those repairs will cost \$27,890. While Immanuel has Memorial Funds to cover this expense, we are asking for donations specifically for this repair work.

Would you consider giving an additional amount to help preserve our beautiful steeple, spires, and cross? Donations can be made via mail, ACH or credit card via ChurchTrac, or during Sunday worship offering time. Please mark your contribution as 'Steeple'.

We greatly appreciate any donations that can be made to contribute towards the valuable repairs.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the family of Tom Ellefson who passed away on September 14th. Tom will be affectionately remembered by those who knew him. May your memories of Tom bring you happiness and peace.

MISSION TEAM REPORT

Blessings to the church and our membership. In 1 Peter 12:10 "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord." This is a reminder to us that there are other ways to give back rather than the collection plate on Sunday.



One of these opportunities is our apple pie day that the mission team does each fall. We have set our pie date for Saturday October 25th. We will begin to make our 700 pies at 8am that morning and with enough help we hope to be finished around 2 pm. Yes, that is almost 117 pies an hour. Our church has a proud tradition for this apple pie fund raiser. Please extend your talents and time to help us out even if it is only for a couple of hours.

As always, our mission team prepares and offers a meal that day to keep us on track. Besides helping the mission team, you also build bonds and relationships with our church membership.

If you have any questions on helping out or to order pies, feel free to fill out the pie sheet at the back of church or contact one of our mission members to put in a pie order for 2025. I can be reached on my cell number 608 642-2811 (Jared Reuter).

Blessings to our mission members and blessings to our church.

Jared and Ann Reuter / Scott and Tara Glendenning



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS

on November 2, 2025. Please turn your clocks back 1 hour.

Immanuel's 2025 Financial Update – Q&A

As many of you know, this year has been one of significant financial activity for Immanuel. We've received a generous bequest, undertaken repairs to our beautiful stained-glass windows, and faced unexpected damage to the steeple after a lightning strike. Below, you'll find a brief Q&A with updates on these important matters. Please feel free to reach out to a Council member or Finance Committee member (Fritz, Phil, or Betsy) with additional questions or concerns.



Q. How much money did we receive from the Blankenhorn estate, and have we received all of the money we were bequeathed?

A. We are very blessed and grateful that Sylvia Blankenhorn named Immanuel as a beneficiary in her Will. Sylvia put our church in her trust in memory of her parents, Richard and Anna Blankenhorn, and uncle, John Thomann who were charter members of the church. We received

a total of \$529,046 from Sylvia's estate and the estate is considered settled. Of that amount, \$522,056 was placed in the Memorial Fund account at Thrivent. The balance was placed in the General Fund.

Q. How much has been paid towards the windows?

A. We have paid the required 25% down payment in the amount of \$73,504. These payments were made from the General Fund which had excess funds at the time of payment. The next installment of 25% will be due upon commencement which is expected to be before the end of the year. The final 50% is due upon completion which is estimated to occur in late 2026. A total of \$220,512 is yet to be paid and those payments will be made from the Memorial Fund.

Q. What about the steeple?

A. The steeple has two different types of damage. There is damage from the lightning strike that will cost \$60,280 to repair and Immanuel's insurance is paying 100% of those costs. There is also age and moisture related damage. There is a main beam that is rotting and the spires and cross need to be repaired and maintained to preserve them as well as the steeple structure itself. The non-lightning strike repairs will cost \$27,890.

Q. Why are we doing the other repairs for \$27,890 now?

A. A portion of these repairs, such as replacing the beam, are necessary to give the construction crew a solid foundation upon which to repair the area affected by the lightning strike. These repairs could be delayed for the time-being, but that would put our steeple at risk of imploding at some point in the future. And then it would cost even more to make the repairs. It is to our benefit to take advantage of the construction crew being on-site to make all necessary repairs at once.

Q. Was there a company that could do this for less money or is there a local contractor that could be used?

A. Steeple repair, as you can imagine, is a specialized skill and service and also requires the appropriate equipment. Krause Konstruktion is known in the western part of Wisconsin as one of the best companies. We could have explored companies in eastern Wisconsin, but that would have taken more time, would probably be more expensive, and Krause comes to us with solid references.

Q. When will the steeple be fully repaired?

A. Krause Konstruktion was available this week (9/17) to wrap our steeple to prevent further water damage. They expect to return in the near future to start the repairs.

Q. How are we paying for the \$27,860 of additional repairs?

A. Immanuel certainly has funds available in the Memorial Fund to pay for these repairs. But we are asking members and non-members to consider making contributions towards this project.

Q. Why are we being asked to make extra contributions, if there is already money to cover the cost?

A. Immanuel has been truly blessed with two generous bequests over the last 10 to 15 years. However, looking ahead, there are some other major expenses on the horizon. Immanuel has aging HVAC equipment and we are anticipating a mandatory roof repair on the Fellowship Hall, along with window replacements in the Church basement. In total, we expect these costs, along with other potential future needs, to exceed \$100,000.00 over the next 15-20 years. In light of this, we are asking members to prayerfully consider making a special contribution toward the steeple project. Please note, this contribution is entirely optional.



REQUESTING INFORMATION TO UPDATE CHURCH RECORDS

Immanuel is looking to update the information in our church records so we have the correct contact information and correct information regarding the membership. There is a form included in this newsletter that has all the information the church would like to update as well as verify that we have your correct information in our records. The form is called *Request for Information to Update ChurcTrac*. You can return this completed form to the church by:

- putting it in the offering plate,
- emailing it to iuccdarlington@gmail.com, or
- mailing it to the church at Immanuel UCC, 339 E. Louisa St., Darlington, WI 53530.

If you do not feel comfortable giving us the dates of birth of your family members, feel free not to include them on the form.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 1 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 5 – Sunday School kids sing during worship
Neighbors In Need offering will be collected

Oct. 8 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.
Church Council Meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Oct. 15 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 22 – Making of the pie crusts
Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 25 – Apple Pie Day

Oct. 27 – **Deadline for November newsletter articles**

Oct. 29 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Nov. 2 – Daylight Savings Time ends. Turn your clocks back 1 hour
Sunday School kids sing during worship

Nov. 5 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Nov. 12 – Chili Supper & Bake Sale – Supper starts at 4:30 p.m. Bake sale starts at 3:30 p.m.



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO UPDATE CHURCTRAC

We are asking church members to take a few minutes to fill out this form with updated information so we have the correct information for each member in the church records. If you do not feel comfortable giving us the dates of birth of your family, feel free not to include them on the form. We will also take current individual photos of your family members, if you are willing to share them. You can return this filled out form to the church by putting it in the offering plate, emailing it to juccdarlington@gmail.com, or mailing it to the church at 339 E. Louisa St., Darlington, WI 53530.

Family Name _____

Head of Household _____ **DOB** _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Spouse Name _____ **DOB** _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Wedding Date _____ **Anniversary Date** _____

Home Address _____

Family Phone Number _____

Additional Contact Information (phone numbers, email addresses)

Children(s) Names:

Date of Birth



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

3 rd	Camdyn Clark
4 th	Janis Ruf
	Claire Reuter
5 th	David Castle
6 th	Janice Ruf
10 th	Ron Johnson
	Joanie Keister
11 th	Amy Ubersox-Ruegsegger
15 th	Marjean Sutherland
17 th	Julie Hinderman
19 th	Makayla Kammes
20 th	Mitchell Martin
	Lowell Ruef
	Mark Ruf
21 st	Remie Duerst
22 nd	Kendyl Ruf
23 rd	Kylie Badtke
	Tyrel Douglas
	Jordan Hinderman
27 th	Fritz Hirsbrunner
28 th	Marion Ruef



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

1 st	Jerry & June Hancock
3 rd	Amy & Denny Prine
4 th	Randy & Judy Huntington
6 th	Brandi & Dustin Wepking
16 th	Jordan & Angie Hinderman
25 th	Gary & Nikki Martin
26 th	Tyler & Danielle Duerst
30 th	Jadin & Heather Ruf



LITURGISTS

Oct. 5	David Sutherland
Oct. 12	Marjean Sutherland
Oct. 19	Roy Berrey
Oct. 26	Tana Risseuw
Nov. 2	Pam Hardt

USHERS/GREETERS

Oct. 5	Dustin & Brandi Wepking Family
Oct. 12	Jordan & Angie Hinderman Family
Oct. 19	Jared & Ann Reuter Family
Oct. 26	Phil & Tana Risseuw
Nov. 2	Roy & Sheila Berrey



COFFEE HOUR

Oct. 5	Kate Black
Oct. 12	Marjean Sutherland
Oct. 19	Nancy Slama
Oct. 26	Debbie Loken



Deadline for the November newsletter articles is **October 27, 2025.**