

Immanuel United Church of Christ

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

NOVEMBER 2025 Newsletter

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The Promise of Love

I promise to compliment you and appreciate you

I promise to honor your thoughts and feelings

I promise to tell you my truth in a loving way

I promise to treat you as my equal

I promise to accept your uniqueness

I promise to value the ways we complement each other

I promise to express my deep love in many ways

I promise to seek excitement, fun and the magic of life with you

I promise to love you and myself unconditionally

I promise to cherish you with all my heart

I love you.

I know this sounds like a very “couples” related poem and I took it that way originally but when I think about how God loves me (ok we are not equals) and how we are called to love each other as we love God, I think it applies fully. Much like 1 Corinthians 13, it is not just for couples but that was written to the church in Corinth to instruct them on the way in which they should love each other. So as your pastor I offer you this promise and I will work to keep it. No matter who you are, no matter where you find yourself on life’s Journey or Faith’s Journey.

Shalom (which means not just peace but also healing but wholeness)

Dana

We just received the newly form Manual on Local Church. This manual is part of the ongoing work to discern and define our structure so that we can engage more fully in our faithful witness in the world. It is a resource for local churches to embody faithful and vital witness and ministry by: recognizing we are part of the whole body of the UCC through covenant. Building and continuing faithful and effective expressions of the local church through healthy governance. Proclaiming and engaging their identity and membership in the UCC through obtaining and maintaining local church standing.

I participate in a Community of Practice. A community of practice is a group of people who share a concern or passion for what they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. They are structured around a sense of community through trust and belonging and build collective expertise through practice. We share skills, ideas, knowledge and experiences along with support and relationship building. My group is all UCC pastors, and we meet once a month. There is often a poem or reading that we reflect upon. This month’s Poem really spoke to me and I am sharing it with you. From Worry to Wonder- A prayer by David Long Higgins.

Holy Creator

Turn my gaze

Toward the flower of the field

And transform my worry

Into wide-eyed wonder

Reveal Your Holy way
Loving and forgiving
Healing and blessing
Renewing and transforming
Even the littlest things
Grant me the grace
Of a soul quieted by you
And soak my thoughts
With desire for you
As met in every turn
You will reveal
In the gift of today.

Shape my mind and heart
With Your love alone
Reforming my deepest desire
With Your marvelous motion
Able to create anew
Out of every chaos

Especially help me to recognize
Evil's easy inertias
Urging frenetic distraction
Dividing my intentions
With worship of things
Promising a fulfillment
And peace only possible
From Your provident heart.

Strengthen my "yes"
To Your holy invitation
Always urging, never forcing
As the sun draws up the planet
Even while rooted deep
In a soil not of its making,

Yes, be the warmth of grace
That draws me toward you
Even as I am grounded
In Your Holy Love.

Root me and ground me
Raise me and grown me
And blossom this little flower
Into a surprising grace
That brings glory and praise
To You Alone, O Love.

My Reflection of Poem

I was struck by the beauty of the writing, the visual images the words created, and how it is a poem but also a prayer to God about how much we attempt to seek God's ways and path and

yet how we fail to follow. It resonates deeply with my desire for God and how easily I can get frenetic dividing my attention and exhausting me with the tasks of this world. I hope it speaks to you in some way, and I hope you will share it with me at some point if it does. God's Blessings on your reading and considering, along with your day.

Dana

Office Hours are 10 am to 3 pm on Tuesdays. I am available for appointments beyond that just give me a call and we will set one up. I am glad to also just chat on the phone if that is what you need. My phone number is 919-523-8187. I am also available for family emergencies and even surprising health changes and events. Please be sure to put my number in your contacts in your phone so it is easy for you to reach me as you might need.

Sunday mornings before service please keep in mind I am participating in the Confirmation class so I may not be around and if you do see me my plate can be full before the service. So in my office there are sticky notes and pens if you need to leave me a note or catch me after service and I will be better prepared to remember to respond to what you might need. Thank you. Dana

Committees- All Committees – if you have had a meeting in September or the first half of October and I was not in attendance- please remember to include me for your next meeting! Please also be thinking of how you might formulate a job description for what you do. The bylaws and the handbook may both help you with this. Why you ask- well so we can use it to explain to people what they would be doing if they were on your committee. It will also help me understand what all you do and why. Thank you!!!!

All Leadership – PLEASE MARK your CALENDARS on Saturday The 7th of February for our New Annual Leadership Meeting. More details to follow but likely 8:30 to 11, we will all read through the bylaws and see if they need updating and make a plan. We will be revisiting our mission vision and direction and possibly our mission statement- one that is memorable, that we can share easily. People on new or now returning to roles will have a chance to adjust to any changes- and the committees will have time to Dream Big for our future.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service. We will be hosting the service. It will be Wednesday night, the 26th at 6pm (note the time change from previous years). Not all the plans have been made but Grace Lutheran will join us. We are thinking of a Pie Social after the service and would like some to sign up for pies for the service. Also we will need readers so there will be a sign up for that also. If there is any special music that can take place let me know. Lastly, we will be collecting non-perishable food and/or funds donated will go to the local food pantry. If you have questions I will do my best to field them as we pull this together. Peace Dana. 919-523-8187.



CHURCH COUNCIL

The October Church Council meeting was held on October 8, 2025.

MEMBERS: Phil Risseuw, Kerry Black, Jordan Hinderman, Pam Hardt, Fritz Hirsbrunner, Sheila Siegler, Nancy Slama, Dave Sutherland, Pastor Dana Caldwell. **Absent:** Connie Ubersox

Guest speaker – Jared Reuter presented to the Council insurance issues facing churches. We faced issues with cracks in the entry sidewalk and are requesting a lightning rod on the cross of the steeple as well. If we can comply with these issues, our renewal will be given in April 2026. Thank you, Jared, for your time to address this for us.

Approval of Minutes – The Council accepted the minutes as presented.

Reports:

Financial Report- The Council accepted the financial report as given.

Pastor Report- Dana discussed the Giving Seminar she and Sheila are attending, explaining giving results for our church, proven ways to increase giving and ways to move into a different mindset regarding giving. Dana is requesting we look over the handouts she gave us and we can come back next month and discuss again. Dana met with Pastor Kate today and had lunch with her. Discussed local school lunches and the need for help in this area locally. Discussed this as a mission for this church. We can discuss this further next month. Discussed church sharing, not all were on board with this but there was not a clear NO answer to this discussion. Dana asked we keep this in mind as we move forward in time.

President Report- old tv in sanctuary hit by lightning would be placed in the fellowship hall as it is bigger than the current tv in the fellowship hall. Salvation Army giving, this comes out of the Endowment Fund, no further discussion. UCCI is asking for us to give a donation to the Camp fund. Finance committee with investigate giving to this fund. OCM membership dues would be \$655 annually to be in the conference. The Council approved paying the membership dues this year. Goal for the OCWM is \$6,000.00. The Council approved this amount. The Council approved installing a lightning rod on the steeple.

Christian Education Committee - Sunday School is going good, confirmation has 3 in class, December 14th is the Christmas Program. Rally Day – September 14; Confirmation Update – 3 children attending.

Building & Grounds Committee - computers are still having issues, repairman coming again tomorrow to work on it. Steeple Repairs – continuing.

Mission Team - Apple pie day Saturday, October 25th. Pie crusts October 22nd

Stewardship Committee -Dana and Sheila continue with the giving seminars. Meeting this Sunday after church.

EF&G Committee -update given.

Endowment Committee - nothing at this time.

Finance Committee Report - nothing new at this time.

Pastor-Parish Committee - meeting was held and a lot was accomplished but more items remain. Another meeting will be needed to finish up. Lines of communication were discussed. A formal Job description was given to Dana. Marjean has resigned, we will need to replace her. Kerry is volunteering to replace Marjean.

Women's Guild - Donated \$500 to the steeple fund. December 12th is the Christmas party with a \$5-10 gift exchange. November 12th is the annual chili supper beginning at 3 pm. Thanks to Jared Reuter for his talk on AAA - very informative.

Worship Committee – Roy Berrey, Nancy McCarten, Cindy Pluemer are on the committee with Pastor Dana.

Old Business

Thrift Store Update – baseboards were cleaned, painting will begin next week. Humpty Dumpty and the nursery room floors will be cleaned. The Council approved \$2,300.00 to strip and clean the floors.

RBS Shirts – Pam will make an announcement about the shirts availability on Sunday.

Church Basement Windows – Estimates still waiting on last estimate, item tabled until later date.

New Business

Steeple Fund Raiser – something to mark collection progress – thermometer? The council is in favor of this.

Next Meeting – November 19, 2025 at 6:15 p.m.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS

Daylight Saving Time ends November 2nd. Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour on November 1st.





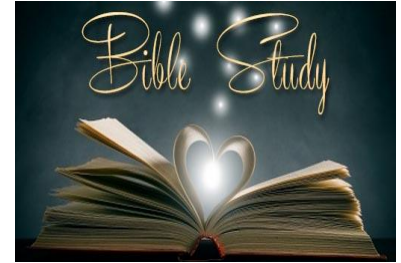
THANK YOU

I would like to thank everyone for their love and support during Tom's passing. Thank you to the Women's Guild for their lovely meal and for all who donated food. Thanks to Rev. Dana for her kind words of comfort and support. We are lucky to have each other for these times of sadness and joy.

Take care & God Bless,
Betsy Ellefson & Family

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Just a reminder that the Wednesday night Bible study group will meet on November 5th and November 19th at 4:30 p.m. The group **will not** meet on November 12th and November 26th.



WOMEN'S GUILD NEWS

Reminder that the Women's Guild is having a Chili Supper/bake sale on November 12th. The bake sale will start at 3:30 and the supper will start at 4:30. All veterans who attend will receive a free meal to honor their service. There are signup sheets on the table in the

Sanctuary, we will need Chili and chicken noodle soup with no noodles in an Ice cream bucket and desserts. There are also other miscellaneous items that can be signed up for. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation to help pay for the sandwiches and noodles that would be great. We look forward to seeing you at the Chili Supper.

Also, there will be no monthly meeting in November because it falls on the day of Chili Supper.

Debbie Loken
Guild President



Giving
Hope
Today

BELL RINGERS NEEDED

It is hard to believe that the Holidays are right around the corner and that means Salvation Army Bell Ringing. IUCC is scheduled for the weekend after Thanksgiving. We will ring bells on Friday, November 28 from 2 pm – 6 pm and Saturday, November 29 from 9 am – 1 pm. Please contact Marjean

Sutherland at 608-482-0091 or marjeansutherland@gmail.com if you are able to help. We can adjust the times a bit, so let me know what works for you. Hoping to get at least eight people so everyone just does an hour.

All money raised serves the people of Lafayette County. Sheriff Reg Gill is our local contact and he and his officers work on our behalf to meet emergency needs for residents in Lafayette County.

**Monthly
Financial
Report**



Monthly Financial Information

	September 2025	Budget	Year to Date 2025	Year to Date Budget
Contributions/Other Revenue	\$22,831	\$ 7,062	\$ 94,165	\$ 67,953
Expenses *	<u>\$17,311</u>	<u>\$ 4,239</u>	<u>\$ 217,948</u>	<u>\$ 50,434</u>
Net Gain/(Loss)	\$ 5,520	\$ 2,823	\$(123,784)	\$ 17,519

- 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
- Monthly Receipts and YTD receipts reflect \$12,019 received from insurance company for storm damage and related expenses are \$7,998 in September and \$12,938 YTD

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

After our last meeting we have decided to host a couple events.

On November 9 we are asking everyone to wear your favorite team shirt or colors to church. This is the off year for PACK-EM-IN Sunday so we are going with your favorite shirt this year.

Just a reminder that Stewardship month is November and the letter will be arriving in your mailbox soon. We will also be having a stewardship moment on Sundays in November.

Mark your calendar for December 13. We will be hosting our first Cookie Walk from 9 a.m. to noon. We will be asking everyone to donate Christmas cookies or bars for this event. More information will follow. All money raised will go towards the fixing of the steeple.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the committee members.

Janice Ruf
Marjean Sutherland
Sheila Siegler
Joan Blaser





THANK YOU

I would like to thank the following people for helping deliver Meals on Wheels:

Janice Ruf
Remie and Oakley Duerst
Marjean and Dave Sutherland

Nicole Lewin
Sheila and Steve Siegler
Gracie Hinderman.

Thank you!

Diane Ritchie
MOW Coordinator



UPCOMING CHURCH EVENTS

Nov. 2 – Daylight Savings Time ends. Turn your clocks back 1 hour on November 1st.

Nov. 5 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Nov. 9 – Wear your favorite team shirt or colors to

church.

Nov. 12 – Chili Supper starting at 4:30 p.m. Bake Sale starts at 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$10.00. Veterans eat for free.

No Women's Guild or Bible Study

Nov. 19 – Bible Study at 4:30 p.m.

Church Council Meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Nov. 23 – Decorating the church for Christmas after worship

Nov. 24 – **Deadline for December newsletter articles**

Nov. 26 – **No Bible Study**

Nov. 27 – Happy Thanksgiving!

Nov. 28 – Immanuel bell ringing for Salvation Army from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Nov. 29 – Immanuel bell ringing for Salvation Army from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dec. 10 – Women's Guild Christmas Party with a potluck at noon. Optional gift exchange. If you want to participate, the gift should be between \$5 and \$10.

Dec. 13 – Cookie Walk from 9 am to noon

Dec. 14 – Sunday School Christmas Program during worship

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



Immanuel United Church of Christ

Contribution Report Comparison

	2021	2025
Total number of families that contributed money	61	61
Total number of active families	104	95
Percentage of families that gave	59%	71%
Total Contributions given by members over 70	60%	85%

Amount Given	Number of families		Total Amount	
	2021	2025	2021	2025
\$25 - \$200	6	14	\$548	\$1,126
\$200 - \$500	11	10	\$3310	\$3,425
\$500 - \$1000	13	5	\$9650	\$3,255
\$1000 - \$2000	18	15	\$26,197	\$21,380
\$2000 - \$4000	9	12	\$23,445	\$34,1475
\$4000 - \$8000	4	5	\$26,250	\$38,515
Totals	61	61	\$89,400	\$101,876

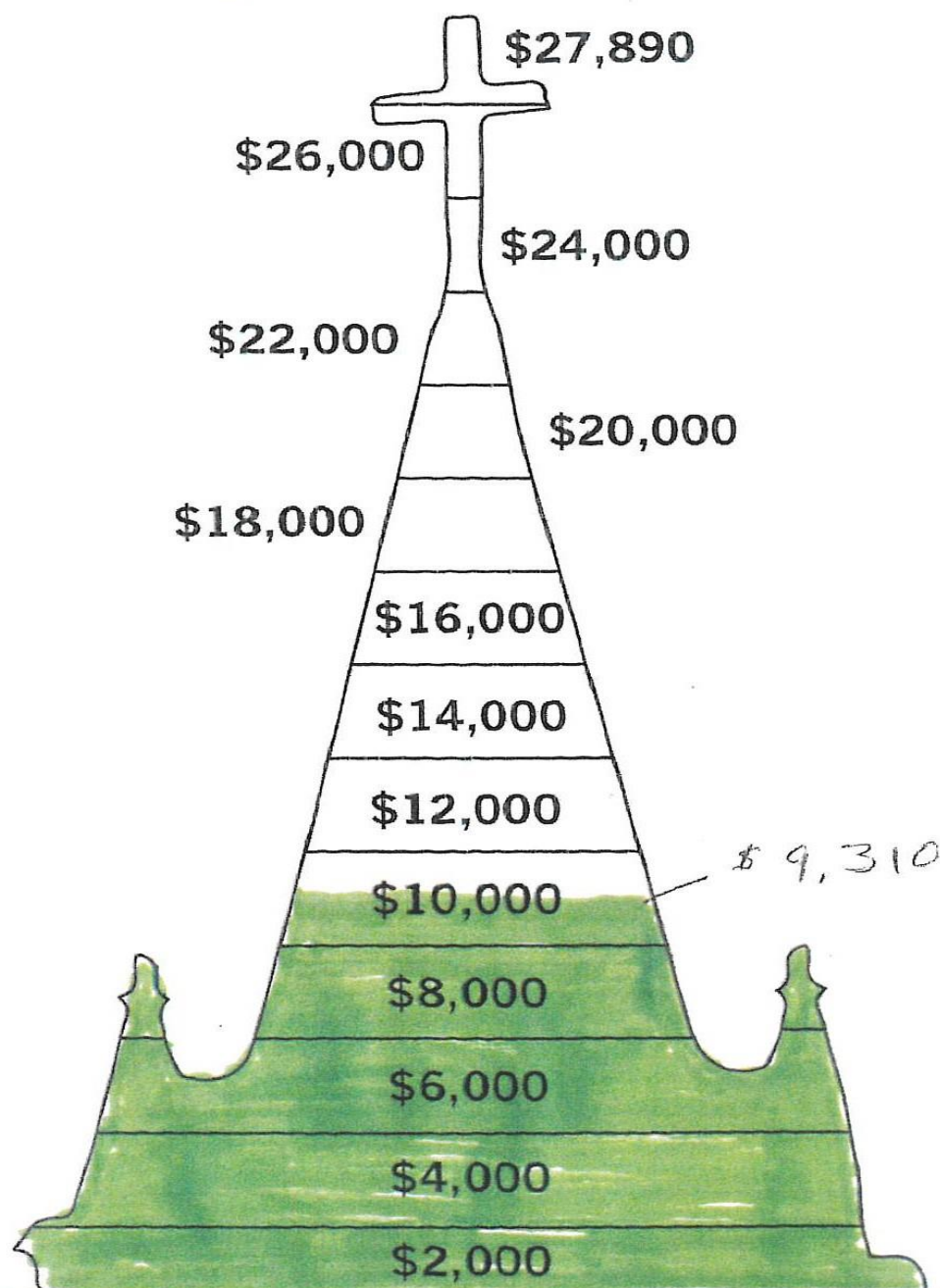
Age Category	Number of people		Contribution	
	2021	2025	2021	2025
0-6	12	10		
7-14	17	11		
15-19	11	13		
19-29	7	14	-0-	\$ 20
30-39	6	7	-0-	\$ 299
40-49	13	11	\$ 615	\$ 560
50-59	15	15	\$ 3,275	\$ 5,490
60-69	44	23	\$32,317	\$ 8,297
70-79	22	41	\$19,008	\$67,200
Age 80+	32	19	\$34,185	\$20,010
Total	179	153	\$89,400	\$101,876

STEEPLE DONATIONS

Exciting news! To date, IUCC members and friends have contributed over \$9,000 towards the \$27,890 in repairs related to the age of the steeple. Thank you to everyone who donated to date!



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Steeple Restoration Fund



Interested in donating? Contact 608.776.4110.



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1st Diane Bredeson
Jean Stauffacher
6th Sloan Glendenning
Matt Kammes
Bernie Ruf
8th Roy Berrey
10th Leta Hirsbrunner
Don Ruf
11th Sheila Berrey
15th Randy Huntington
Brett Jenson
Trace Jenson
22nd Madison Reilly
23rd Bruce Geissbuhler
Larry Salathe
24th Randy Ubersox
25th Heather Ruf
28th Betty Merriam
30th Tucker Lewin



NOVEMBER USHERS/ GREETERS

2nd Roy & Sheila
Berrey

9th Kerry & Kate Black
16th Ron & Joan Blaser
23rd Ron Ubersox & Amy Ruegsegger
30th Nancy Slama & Heidi Rear
Dec. 7th – Randy & Debbie Loken



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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

NOVEMBER COFFEE HOUR

3rd Kate Black
10th LeeAnne Ruef
17th Debbie Loken
24th Pam Hardt
Dec. 1st – Connie Ubersox



NOVEMBER LITURGISTS

2nd Roy Berrey
9th Sara Gleason
16th Joan Blaser
23rd Sheila Siegler
30th Sloan Glendenning
Dec. 7th – Pastor Dana Caldwell



Deadline for the
December
newsletter articles
is **November 24,**
2025.