

# PARISH NEWS



Eight months ago, we made the difficult decision to suspend in-person ministry at Immanuel. At the time, I thought it was going to last a couple of months at the most, and by the middle of summer, we would return to more familiar patterns of church life.

Unfortunately, that didn't happen, and while we've new ways of being the church together, there's a lot that we can't really replace. Coffee hours, pot lucks, getting caught up in conversation as we linger in the narthex—these are all important parts of our life together as the people of God, and there's no substitute for them.

Perhaps the most notably absent in the midst of a pandemic is fasting from communion during our Sunday worship services. I've gotten a number of questions wondering why we're not celebrating communion during our online worship, as some other communities have been. That inconsistency between congregations can be confusing, since unlike some other synods that have made a recommendation one way or another, Bishop Canda of the Central States Synod, has encouraged this discernment locally.

One of the most important parts of my call to Immanuel is the faithful celebration of the sacraments, and after a lot of prayerful discernment, I do not believe that virtual or remote communion is a theologically sound practice.

DECEMBER  
2020

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The Parish News is a monthly publication of ILC. Articles or information pertinent to the life and mission of the congregation may be emailed to the office at [office@immanuelkc.org](mailto:office@immanuelkc.org).

Space limitations may require editing of material. Deadline for the **January 2021 issue is Friday, December 18, 2020.**

To be removed from our mailing list or submit a change of address, contact the church office at 816-931-8483 or [office@immanuelkc.org](mailto:office@immanuelkc.org).

Holy Communion is fundamentally a shared meal, something recognizable as a staple food and a festive drink blessed by God and shared with all who hunger. Generally, this takes the form of bread and wine, although some localities might use different elements, but each community celebrates with the same elements. If we were to celebrate in front of a screen in our own homes, we would not be sharing those elements in common—we might even be celebrating at different times, depending on when people watched the worship stream on Youtube. It wouldn't be recognizable as a shared meal.

Additionally, central to holy communion is that this meal is a gift. When we celebrate at church, we use bread that's been made for this purpose, prepared by the Altar Guild for the people in this place. Wine is bought with money that's collected during the offering. All these communal acts of worship provide a meal that feeds anyone who hungers for the grace of God. These gifts are freely given; no one is expected to provide their own meal, instead we're all fed with the abundance of the community. Without these communal acts, much of the context that gives meaning to the Eucharist is stripped away, leaving an expectation that everyone must provide their own meal to participate. A small portion of bread and wine might seem insignificant for some members of the community, but it could exclude people from the table of God's grace.

I recognize that we may not all be of one mind on this, and I encourage you to reach out to me if you want to have deeper conversation about this. As our fast continues in the face of this pandemic, we are still offering communion in small groups outside at Immanuel. It's an imperfect solution, but it's the best we have found until we can safely gather together again—a day I am eagerly awaiting.

In Peace,  
Pastor Micah Sievenpiper

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# IMMANUEL LEADERSHIP

## STAFF

Micah Sievenpiper - Pastor  
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Ann Rundquist - Ministry Coordinator  
pastorannrundquist@gmail.com

Cell: 785-643-7697

Ter'Raney Teague - Administrative Assistant

Suzanne Anderson - Music Director

Robert Barthel - Organist

Kevin Fewell - Building Manager

## Council & Executive Committee

Mary Jo Moore - President

Connie Benolkin - Vice President

Terry Kueker - Secretary

Kathy Linder - Treasurer

Rick Sundell - Financial Secretary

Lynden Peters

Mindy Rash

Jack Umbach

Kathy Boehmer

Deborah Crawford

Kate Hauber

Mason Carey

Sarah Prem

Linda Fewell

# IN OUR PRAYERS...

## Members of Immanuel

Family and Friends of **Jackie Turner**, as they mourn her death

**Robert and Linda Setterburg**, as they mourn the death and celebrate the life of Robert's mother

**Vicki and Steve Swanson**, who mourn the death and celebrate the life of Vicki's brother, Eric Gustafson

**Peg Himebaugh**, who's tested positive for COVID-19

**Larry Taylor**, experiencing health issues.

**Joe and Lori Clanin**, who survived a house fire but still are rebuilding and repairing.

**Rev. Keith Klockau, Lori Clanin, Andree Cuthbertson, Theresa Draper, Ann Erickson, De Pfofner, Naomi Karmeier, Gerry Niewald, Deanne Schlehuber, and Carolyn Wilson**, coping with health issues.

*All who are separated from loved ones because of COVID-19 restrictions.*

## Friends of Immanuel

**Michelle Benolkin**, sister-in-law of Larry and Connie Benolkin

Family of **Lee Cumba**, friend of Karole Jacobsen

Death of **Albert Konovalski**, family of Karole Jacobsen

**Jack & Mary Kantola**, friends of Peg Himebaugh

**Paula Weir**, friend of Betty Pera

**Bakeberg Family**, friends of Betty Pera

**Kat M., Janice M.**, friends of Peggy Dollard

**Lee Hass**, grandmother of Catie Tomlin

**Baby Reylyn & Family**, friends of Peggy Dollard

**Major**, friend of Linda Taylor & Peggy Dollard

**Kim R & Family**, friends of Peggy Dollard

**Eleanor Daniels**, daughter of Clay & Martha Bowden

**Julia Mills**, niece of CeCe & Tracy Atherton

**Rock Westfahl**, friend of Kevin & Linda Fewell

**Janet & Randy Spicer**, friends of Mary Coleman Renoe

**Carol Gillespie**, friend of CeCe & Tracy Atherton

**Karen Wuertz**, sister-in-law of Linda Taylor

**Liz Wuertz**, sister-in-law of Linda Taylor

**Darla Wolters**, family of Carmen Norris

**Harry Roth**, friend of Henrik Andersen

**James Clanin**, family of Lori Clanin

**Lauren James**, friend of Lori Clanin

**Judy Robinson**, friend of Mary Jo Moore

**Chloe & Carley Engler**, great nieces of Sally Baehni

**Normajeane Holtje**, cousin of Mike Ortmann

**Margaret Kohler**, aunt of Lori Clanin

**Jim & Ethel Clanin**, parents of Lori Clanin

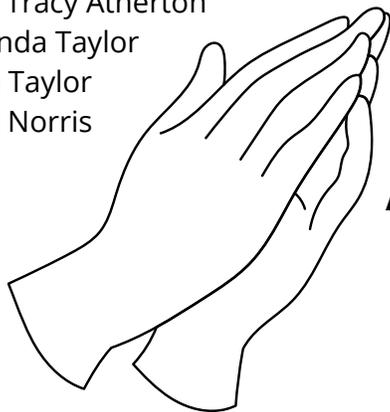
**Pinky Brauer**, sister-in-law of Carolyn Brauer

**Eric Gustafson**, brother of Vicki Swanson

**Audrey Mueller**, Aunt of Mike Ortmann

**Nancy A.**, friend of Linda Setterburg

**Allan Boardman**, friend of Kevin and Linda Fewell



# From the President

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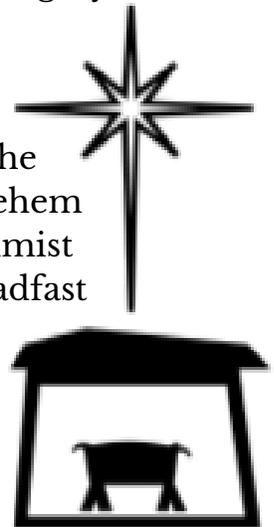
Ever felt caught in the middle? My article for the December Parish News is due and yet this is the week of Thanksgiving, the season of gratitude. That time of year when we count our blessings, giving thanks for all of the goodness in our lives. Advent arrives soon after.

This liturgical season, signifying the beginning of the church year, begins November 29. Advent is a time of anticipation, the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. For many of us, including myself, it is a time of turning “inward”, a time of solitude and prayer, a time of hopeful watching and waiting.

I ask you to reflect on your blessings, the goodness you have experienced in your life. One of my blessings is having eyes to see the beauty of seasonal changes.

We Midwesterners are fortunate to experience all four seasons of change. By Thanksgiving, the leaves have turned their brilliant hues and fallen to the ground. Crops have been harvested and gardens put to bed. Temperatures drop and fireplaces spring to life. Cloudy skies outnumber sunny ones. The night comes earlier in the day now and on December 21 we enter into what Immanuel member, Henrik Andersen, likes to call the “dark season”. Long before author George R.R. Martin penned the phrase “winter is coming”, we looked to the cold, grey skies and said winter was on its way.

Where we live, Christmas arrives during the cold, grey season of winter. Having spent the preceding month watching and waiting, the birth of Jesus Christ is a blessed event marked by the Star of Bethlehem shining bright in the desert sky. For this I give thanks. As the psalmist says in 107:1, “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast loves endures forever.”



What do you find yourself watching and waiting for during Advent? Are you hoping for a safe and effective vaccine? I am. We all want a return to our pre-pandemic lives, moving about freely to work and to play, and, importantly, being together again with our loved ones. During times of despair, we rely on God to calm our anxiety, get us back on our feet, and give us hope that we will survive anything the world throws at us.

As we struggle in these “middle” times, remember that God is constantly at work to make our lives better, even if it doesn't feel that way all of the time. As Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:18-19 “so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power.”

May the Lord Jesus Christ grant you peace and renew your strength for the years ahead!

In Peace,  
Mary Jo Moore

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## HOLY COMMUNION AT IMMANUEL

We are offering service of Holy Communion at Immanuel's back parking lot. Group sizes will need to be limited, to allow for distance between us, so please sign up for a spot ahead of time by clicking this link: <https://reopen.church/r/sRh0T9QI>.

We're doing our best to mitigate the risk of gathering, and when we come together in these days of pandemic, there is a risk of spreading COVID-19. To help us limit that risk, we ask that you to keep the following in mind:

- Please do not attend if you:
  - have tested positive for COVID-19, and have had any symptoms within the last 14 days
  - have had COVID-like symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, etc.) within the last 72 hours
  - have had close contact with someone who has tested positive within the last 14 days
- Masks must be worn over your nose and mouth
- Please practice physical distancing, keeping 10 feet of separation from other people (aside from family members)
- Please practice safe hygiene while among other people (e.g., coughing and sneezing into your elbow)
- Bathrooms will not be available for use, as the church building will not be open
- Please do not attend if you have not registered.

# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

## Highlights of the November 17, 2020, Council Meeting

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- Participation in the 2021 Youth Works (YW) Program – Pastor reported that the COVID-19 Advisory Committee has agreed to explore the opportunity to host the 2021 Youth Works program, but will not agree to anything dangerous. Much of their decision may hinge on the availability of vaccine roll out information. The ILC position has been communicated to YW.
- Pastor presented his Preliminary Sanctuary Stream Upgrade Plan to enhance on-line coverage of live worship services, now and in a post COVID-19 environment. It calls for three cameras and associated media totaling roughly \$4,455. The Council approved a motion authorizing use of Evangelism Account 2450 funds totaling \$2,266. Pastor will contact the Memorials Commission for approval to use the Memorial Fund to cover the balance of the cost. The cameras would be located as follows:
  - One balcony camera to cover the pulpit, font, table, and similar action.
  - A second balcony wide-angle camera to cover the chancel.
  - And a fixed camera focusing on the organ and choir.
- Mary Jo Moore has received a letter of resignation from Janie Fee. Following discussion Mason Carey moved and Lynden Peters seconded a motion to accept her resignation, creating a vacancy on the Council. The motion carried.
- President Moore further advised that Linda Fewell has agreed to fill the vacated position. Mason Carey moved and Deborah Crawford seconded a motion to appoint Linda Fewell to the vacated position effective December 1, 2020. The motion carried.

# DECEMBER

## WEEKLY READINGS

06

**FIRST READING** ISAIAH 40:1-11

**PSALM** PSALM 85:1-2, 8-13

**SECOND READING** 2 PETER 3:8-15A

**GOSPEL** MARK 1:1-8

13

**FIRST READING** ISAIAH 61:1-4, 8-11

**PSALM** PSALM 126

**SECOND READING** 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

**GOSPEL** JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

20

**FIRST READING** 2 SAMUEL 7:1-11, 16

**PSALM** LUKE 1:46B-55

**SECOND READING** ROMANS 16:25-27

**GOSPEL** LUKE 1:26-38

24

**FIRST READING** ISAIAH 9:2-7

**PSALM** PSALM 96

**SECOND READING** TITUS 2:11-14

**GOSPEL** LUKE 2:1-14 [15-20]

27

**LESSONS & CAROLS**

# ILC EVENTS

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CLICK ON EACH HEADING TO DIRECT YOU TO THE EVENT

**9:30 AM  
SUNDAYS**

VIRTUAL SERVICE

**AFTER SUNDAY  
SERVICE**

BIBLE STUDY

**10:00 AM  
TUESDAYS**

COFFEE &  
CONVERSATION

**1:00 PM  
WEDNESDAYS  
DEC 2 | 9 | 16 | 23**

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

**7:00 PM  
WEDNESDAYS**

BOOK STUDY

**7:00 PM  
THURSDAYS**

HAPPY HOUR

**5:00 PM  
DECEMBER 24**

CHRISTMAS EVE  
SERVICE

# ALLELUIA AND THE ARTS

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Alleluia and the Arts will take place every Sunday in Advent.

All Sunday School families are invited to join us at 10 AM, as Megan Sawyer leads us in music and song.  
It will be informal and won't run too long.

Just click the link below!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6011647126>

Meeting ID: 601 164 7126

One tap mobile: +16465588656,,6011647126# US

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## VIRTUAL HYMN CHOIR

### Do you like to sing hymns?

Are you looking for a way to contribute to Sunday morning worship services in this time of social distancing? I am looking for more people to contribute to weekly Virtual Hymn Choirs. You do not need to be a regular member of the Immanuel Choir to sing!

If you are interested, you will need the following:

1. A willing spirit, a voice and the ability to sing rhythmically.
2. Wired headphones (even earbuds work well) and a device - phone, tablet, computer, etc. - to listen to a guide track on
3. Another device to record with

If you are at all interested, I would urge you to give it a try! For more information and instructions, please contact Suzanne Anderson at [suzanneandersonilc@gmail.com](mailto:suzanneandersonilc@gmail.com)

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## FALL COMMITMENT DRIVE

As we navigate these strange days, we're finding new ways to do ministry together. You should have received a letter from your Stewardship Committee, encouraging you to spend time in prayerful discernment over how you are being called to be a part of the ministry of Immanuel.

On December 20th, we'll hold our Commitment Sunday during our worship service, so send us a picture of you completing or mailing your commitment card, and if you'd like to be more visible in worship, send us a short video that answers the question "what gives you hope?" Because even when we are apart, we continue to be the body of Christ in this world.

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# Longest Night Service

Immanuel's prayer team will offer its 11th annual Longest Night service at  
*6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 8, via Zoom.*

The service acknowledges the grief, pain and losses that have accrued in 2020. It will include music, Scripture, prayer, a homily and a candle-lighting ritual that offers an opportunity to say out loud our individual losses.

Though it won't be held on the actual day with the longest period of darkness, the service recognizes the sadness and fear that comes from our personal longest nights, be they the death of a loved one or the loss of dreams or security. The service also recognizes the hope that comes from life's longest nights: that, at the end of the night, daylight comes, and gradually, the nights grow shorter.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5143355703>

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

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## Food Donations are a Thanksgiving Blessing

Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches — almost 100 of them to date — are part of one Immanuel family's Thanksgiving donation to The Gathering Table (formerly Children's Memorial Lutheran Church).

Pastor Ann Rundquist reports that needs have skyrocketed during the pandemic. As a result, The Gathering Table now serves more than *1,000* to-go meals each month, in addition to serving turkey and all the fixings to 105 hungry people (*See photos captured on p. 11*).

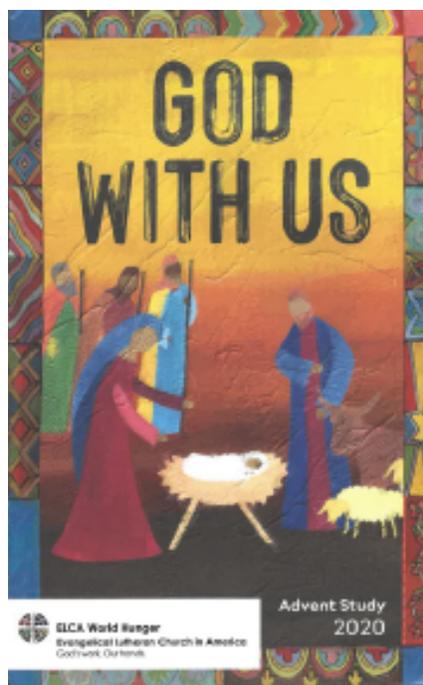
She adds that making sandwiches or sack lunches are great family activities, but there are many ways to help feed our neighbors in need who visit The Gathering Table. Instant mashed potatoes, and Christmas napkins and cups are an immediate need — they are the only items still required for special holiday meals.

To learn more about how you can give thanks for your blessings by helping someone in need, contact Pastor Ann, [PastorAnnRundquist@gmail.com](mailto:PastorAnnRundquist@gmail.com) or 1-785-643-7697.



**100 LOAVES OF  
PUMPKIN BREAD  
WERE MADE BY  
SHARYL SERAFIN  
FOR GATHERING  
TABLE'S  
THANKSGIVING  
FEAST!**





Pastor Ann is starting an Advent Bible Study on **Dec. 2 that will continue for four weeks on Wednesdays at 1:00 PM** on Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5143355703>

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

Please send Pastor Ann ([pastorannrundquist@gmail.com](mailto:pastorannrundquist@gmail.com)) a message to receive the Advent Bible Study booklet via mail or she can hand deliver it.

**Parents** please send in your children's Advent Art photos to include in the newsletter and weekly announcements!



# SOCIAL MINISTRY

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## **GREAT SUNDAY SCHOOL KIDS CREATE GREAT ART FOR A GREAT CAUSE**

With handmade greeting cards made lovingly by Immanuel's Sunday School students, you can say Happy Birthday, send caring thoughts, reach out with wishes for good health and benefit Lutheran Disaster Response all at the same time. Assortments of cards created by Abby, Eleanor, Benny, Maggie, Alex, Sam, Kai, Josh and Augie are available in packs of five for only \$10. Every penny of that amount will provide hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by wildfire, hurricanes and other disasters.

To purchase one or more card packs, contact Linda Fewell, [Linda.Fewell23@gmail.com](mailto:Linda.Fewell23@gmail.com) or 816-868-0713. Linda happily will deliver the cards to your home.

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## **Thinking About Joining Immanuel?**

Within a few weeks, Immanuel officially will welcome at least one new member into the fellowship of faith we share at Immanuel. Stay tuned!

If you've been thinking about joining the congregation or simply would like more information about what membership means, contact Pastor Micah, [msievenpiper@gmail.com](mailto:msievenpiper@gmail.com) or 816-931-8483, ext. 11.

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## **You Can Join New Tech Team To Help Transmit Worship, Other Programs**

Pastor Micah is seeking a few assistants to help compile digital files and assist during live-stream worship and other events.

"Even when we return to in-person worship, learning and service — which simply can't come too soon! — we'll still need an online option to post on Immanuel's website," he says. "Live streaming and recording our services helps us reach more people, including our own members who, even when the virus is a thing of the past, can't make it to church."

Although it might be helpful to be comfortable with technology in general, Tech Team members don't need any experience. To volunteer, contact Pastor Micah, [msievenpiper@gmail.com](mailto:msievenpiper@gmail.com) or 816-931-8483, ext. 11.

# MLM CHRISTMAS STORE

## 2020 VOLUNTEER INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE

### VOLUNTEER ROLES

**Carrying Elves:** Monday December 7th – Saturday December 12th (3 different shifts available, please see sign up for more details)

**Pre-Pick Up Sorting Elves:** Monday December 7th - Saturday December 12th (3 different shifts available, please see sign up for more details)

**Shopping Elves:** Various days and times, please see sign up for more detail

**Inventory and Packing Elves:** Monday, December 14th and Tuesday, December 15th, 11:30 am - 4:30pm

**Floor/Area Volunteers:** Various days and times, please see sign up for more detail

**Click here to sign up** (please read each description and look at the date/times before signing up and remember each individual, no matter their age, counts as a person).

Can't volunteer but would still like to help? **Click here** to check out our Amazon Wish List. Items will be sent directly to MLM.

**\$20 Target and Wal-Mart gift cards are also needed**

Questions? Please contact Rebecka Noel at **rebeckanoel@mlmkc.org**.

# MLM LOVES VOLUNTEERS

Multiple volunteer opportunities currently are available at Metro Lutheran Ministry (MLM). If you are not part of a vulnerable population, please consider these opportunities:

## Donate Boxes



The MLM Christmas Store needs boxes that:

- Have lids, such as copy-paper boxes.
- Measure 16" x 20" x 20", 22" x 16" x 15" or 20" X 20" X 12"

Any boxes close to those

sizes are welcomed. You can deliver boxes to MLM, 3031 Holmes or, for delivery assistance, contact Linda Fewell, [Linda.Fewell23@gmail.com](mailto:Linda.Fewell23@gmail.com) or 816-868-0713.

**Garden/Orchard** - End-of-season cleanup is underway in the MLM garden and orchard, which help feed hungry people free of charge. This is a fun, no-skills-required activity for groups, families, or anyone who enjoys the outdoors. For more information or to volunteer, contact Marcus, [marcusleach@mlmkc.org](mailto:marcusleach@mlmkc.org).



**Pre-Packing Food Boxes** - Volunteers pre-pack food boxes that are distributed through the always-busy MLM Food Pantry. You can volunteer for a shift with the packing team 8:30-11 a.m. Monday-Friday at 3031Holmes. You must sign up in advance. For information or to sign up, contact Rebecka, [rebeckanoel@mlmkc.org](mailto:rebeckanoel@mlmkc.org).



# HAPPY

# Birthday

Lynden Peters 12/1

Norma Carr 12/2

Heather Winker 12/3

Dorothy Evans 12/4

Terry Kueker 12/4

Chris Thomsen 12/5

Amy Ambrosion-Reid 12/9

Ana Hirsekorn 12/9

Abigail Hastings 12/11

Brad Parson 12/12

Nora Roddy 12/13

Tracy Browning 12/14

Scott Gobber 12/15

Keith Klockau 12/17

Mary Jo Moore 12/19

Linda Nelson 12/20

Ingrid Peterson 12/20

Gabriella Krupp 12/24

Madelyn Radke 12/25

Brooke Rothe 12/26

Theresa Draper 12/27

Deloris Craig 12/29





## **JOIN TITHE.LY**

Immanuel Lutheran's online tithe & donation tool.

Download the app or sign up via their website  
for safe and secure donations.

### **FOLLOW THESE EASY STEPS**



Sign Up



Search for Immanuel KC



Donate

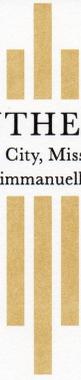
### **CLICK BELOW TO GET STARTED**



Online



Get the app



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[www.immanuelkc.org](http://www.immanuelkc.org)

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**