



PARISH NEWS

June 2022

People of God,

“The good want power, but to weep barren tears.
The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.
The wise want love;
and those who love want wisdom;
And all best things are thus confused to ill.”

Percy Bysshe Shelley



We live in the gray areas. And there are times I wish the world was more black and white; there's a kind of comfort in absolute moral certainty, in knowing what is right and what is wrong. There are black-and-white times like that, moments of total clarity when we know the correct path to choose, the right decision to make. But most of the time, things aren't that simple. Most of the time, we have to navigate a world full of complicated issues that have no simple answers.

What can we do to curb gun violence?

How can we care for the sick and the poor when health care is expensive?

How can we house the houseless when the cost of living is shooting through the roof?

These are important questions to ask ourselves, but none of them have simple answers. It's difficult to live in the gray areas, but we hear in the gospels that the gray areas are where Jesus meets us. In the messy valleys of our lives, God promises to abide with us, to make her dwelling place among us.

And just because the gray areas are difficult doesn't mean we should sit on the sidelines. We're called to take action, putting our faith into practice for the good of all creation.

It takes courage to follow the call of Jesus, knowing that we don't have all the answers. But if we have the humility to learn and the courage to follow where Jesus is calling us, we might just be surprised at what we're able to accomplish together.

In Peace,
Pastor Micah

JOIN WORSHIP IN PERSON OR ONLINE



As Christ welcomes us, Immanuel welcomes you to worship at 9:30 a.m. Sundays.

In-person worship in the sanctuary also is streamed live on Immanuel's YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/immanuelkansascity>.

As we enter the season of Pentecost, we celebrate that we have been given the Holy Spirit as an advocate to accompany us. Poured out in wind and fire, water, wine, and bread, the Spirit abides in and among us. We give thanks that God speaks to each of us, no matter our origins, language or life paths. Filled with the Spirit of truth, we go out from worship to proclaim the saving power of Christ's love and the freedom of God's grace.

CALLING IMMANUEL VOLUNTEERS

There are many volunteer opportunities at Immanuel. For example:

- Immanuel's financial secretary needs volunteers to count offerings after church on Sundays. Working in a team of 2-3 people, you will count, document and prepare a deposit for the offerings. The time commitment is about 90 minutes one Sunday per month. To volunteer or learn more, contact Linda Fox, 816-679-0928 or stitchingfox@sbcglobal.net.
- The Worship & Arts Committee seeks volunteers to carry the brass cross into and out of worship. Note that the cross weighs more than 20 pounds and is a bit top heavy. If you are interested and can carry the cross — or would like to try carrying it — contact Karen Bame, bamek@umkc.edu, or the church office, office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483.
- The Congregational Life Committee needs volunteers to work together to offer opportunities for fellowship, food and fun. It's a fresh opportunity to support Immanuel's community-building efforts. Call the church office to volunteer to help bring new life into our ministry.



SUNDAY SCHOOL IS ON HIATUS, ADULT FORUM TACKLES WIDE-RANGING TOPICS



School is out and Immanuel Sunday School is on hiatus. Watch for summertime updates in July.

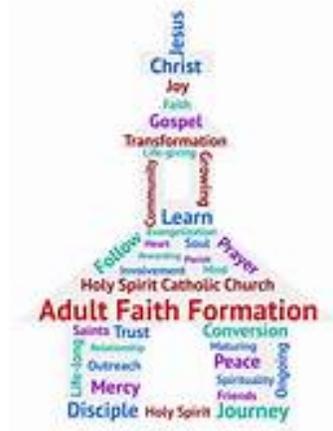
Adult Forum begins 15 minutes after Sunday worship in Spong Common Room. Here's the Adult Forum schedule for June:

June 5 — Pentecost in Prayer: Join Melodee Blobaum, a member of the Immanuel Prayer Team, to explore spiritual practices that embrace the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

June 12 — Metro Lutheran Ministry and Blessings Around Thrift Store: Learn how proceeds from sales at the local Blessings Around Thrift Store help support the important work at Metro Lutheran Ministry.

June 19 — American Sign Language in Education: God speaks to us in all languages, including sign language. Immanuel member Carmen Norris will share how sign language enhances the educational experience in the U.S.

June 26 — Green Burial: Hear from local expert Steve Nicely about green burial, which is designed to have a minimal environmental impact and conserve natural resources. Also called natural burial or eco-friendly burial, green burial emphasizes simplicity and sustainability.



WELCOME, YOUTHWORKS!



YouthWorks, which provides Christ-centered mission trips for thousands of teenagers and adult leaders in communities across the U.S. and beyond, has returned to Kansas City and once again is making Immanuel its summer home.

The staff has just arrived, and groups of teen volunteers, each of which will stay for a week, will be at Immanuel June 12 to July 29.

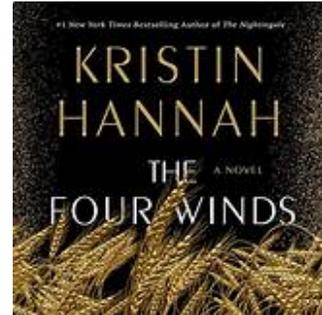
Except for a break during the worst of the pandemic, YouthWorks has made Immanuel its Kansas City summer headquarters for more than a decade. The staff and volunteers live in our building while they provide nonprofit groups in Kansas City with valuable labor to accomplish tasks that otherwise might go undone.

Could you welcome and show hospitality to the three-person YouthWorks staff by inviting them to your home for a simple weekend meal and the opportunity to take a shower? Please sign up on the bulletin board in the main sanctuary-level hallway or contact the church office to host the staff volunteers on a weekend of your choice. Prior to your chosen date, one of the YouthWorks staff people will contact you about setting a time and other details.

FRIENDS OF LITERATURE MEETS TO DISCUSS *THE FOUR WINDS*

Friends of Literature will meet at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, June 9, at the home of Jean Nuernberger, 6324 Maple Drive, Mission, KS, 66212. The group will discuss *The Four Winds* by Kristen Hannah, who also wrote *The Nightingale* and *The Great Alone*.

All are welcome! To request the Friends of Literature Zoom link if you can't attend in person, contact Don Arney, 816-918-5371 or 22sora@gmail.com.



The Four Winds tells the story of Elsa Martinelli, who like so many of her neighbors during the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression, must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or go west to California in search of a better life. The novel is described as a compelling story of America and the American Dream as seen through the eyes of an indomitable woman whose courage and sacrifice define a generation.

COMING SOON: NEW BOILER AND HOT WATER HEATER WITH A BIG PRICE TAG



The boiler that provides heat and the water heater that supplies hot water for Immanuel's building must be replaced, so new units will be installed this summer. The new models will decrease the church's energy costs, but the initial investment is huge.

We're fortunate to be able to apply a generous bequest from the estate of George and Evelyn Roberts, but donations to help cover the cost of the new boiler and hot water heater are appreciated.

Thanks to Immanuel member Terry Kueker for identifying the right vendors and installers for the new equipment, and thanks to all for your generosity.

NICE FILING CABINETS AVAILABLE NOW

You can take your pick of filing cabinets that Immanuel no longer uses. They are beneath the coat rack on the right side of the lower-level hallway as you enter the south Bell Street door. The size and condition of the cabinets vary, but all are in good working order.

There is no charge for the cabinets, but if you would like to make a donation to the boiler-replacement fund in exchange for one or more of them, that would be appreciated! Questions? Contact the church office.

CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS TO OUR GRADUATES



Allison Winker, daughter of Heather and Jeff Winker and granddaughter of Roland and Betty Pera, graduated from Drake University with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science. Allison also has finished her first year in Drake's Occupational Therapy Doctorate program.



Perry Elaine Ross, daughter of Don and Lynne Ross and granddaughter of Kenny and Connie Ross, graduated from Shawnee Mission West High School. She will attend the University of Arkansas in the fall.



Sarah Wilcox, daughter of Rick and Ellen Wilcox, graduated from Creighton University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. During July, she will begin working in the neonatal intensive care unit at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City.



Liam Hyland, son of Suzanne Steffen and Bob Hyland, and pictured with his sister Natalie, graduated from Bishop Miege High School. He will attend Columbia College Chicago this fall.

THANK YOU FOR THE WARM COATS



On behalf of the Metro Lutheran Ministry Christmas Store and Immanuel's Social Ministry Committee, thanks to all who donated warm coats to share with people who will need them.

One of the donated coats already is providing comfort to a gentleman who was soaking wet when he came to Immanuel's door for help on a cool, very rainy day in May. Thanks Be To God!

NEWS FROM YOUR CONGREGATION COUNCIL

The Immanuel Congregation Council, which met May 24:

- Received an update from Terry Kueker about the state of the church's roof. We are awaiting a bid for roof repairs that would address water entry into the sanctuary and issues with the bell tower.
- Approved a Personnel Policy Handbook drafted by the Personnel Committee. Thank you to the members of this committee for their diligent and thoughtful work on this important document.
- Assembled a task force to explore ways to raise funds for major building repair projects. Additional members are welcome! Contact Pastor Micah or Connie Benolkin if you are interested in getting involved.
- Assumed responsibility for determining the future of Immanuel's mask requirement and will consider it at each meeting.



DURING THE WEEK, IMMANUEL IS TEEMING WITH ACTION

Even without YouthWorks, which will transform Immanuel's building into "teenager central" for two months this summer, Immanuel is brimming with action during each week. In addition to congregation events and meetings, a variety of organizations regularly meet in our building.

Chief among those groups is Purple Dragon Day Care, which educates preschoolers Monday-Friday in Immanuel's lower-level classrooms.

Other groups that meet in our building, some of which are on summer break, include:

- Shin Do Ryu Karate.
- Dance groups, including Scandinavian Dancers, German Folk Dancers and World Folk Dancers.
- Music groups, including Soundwave Academy, Youth Chorus of Kansas City and Choral Spectrum. Other music schools and music students also hold recitals in our sanctuary.
- Health- and recovery-focused groups such as OA-KC.
- Neighborhood groups, including the West Plaza and Volker neighborhood associations.

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(Immanuel Is Teeming With Action, continued)

As part of Immanuel's longstanding commitment to enriching the community of which we are a part, the not-for-profit groups pay below-market rates to use our spaces. We are happy to welcome them as they serve the people of Kansas City.

Thanks from Ryan Main, director of Youth Chorus of Kansas City, echoes words of gratitude from other groups. "Thank you for partnering with us to help make YCKC possible," he writes. "It matters deeply to a lot of very sweet and talented kiddos around the metro." Check out the YouTube video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfL31s6IVSM> to learn more about the chorus, and watch them rehearse in Luther Hall.



(Above) The Youth Chorus Kansas City Prelude Choir is among Youth Chorus KC singing groups. The organization provides full or partial scholarships to more than 25 percent of its families every year, and it plans to double its scholarships during the next five years.



(At left) Woodwind musicians from the Kansas City Symphony recently visited Purple Dragon Day Care to introduce the preschoolers to their instruments, including how each instrument makes sounds. They also shared their music, including selections by Mozart.

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(Immanuel Is Teeming With Action, continued)



(Above) The kids were mesmerized and excited by the symphony musicians and the music. They learned some musical terms, including forte (loud) and piano (soft). They raised their hands when the music was loud and put their hands in their laps when the music was soft.

JUNE SCRIPTURE READINGS AND WORSHIP LEADERS

JUNE 5

First Reading: Acts 2:1-21

Psalmody: Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

Second Reading: Romans 8:14-17

Gospel: John 14:8-17 [25-27]

Assisting Minister: Beth Callstrom

Psalmist: Linda Taylor

Communion Steward: Connie Ross

Crucifer: Milan Hanson

Altar Committee: Ellen Wilcox

Media: Kevin Fewell

Ushers: Pam Edvalds, Mike Ortmann, Jean Nuernberger, Del Karmeier

JUNE 12

First Reading: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Psalmody: Psalm 8

Second Reading: Romans 5:1-5

Gospel: John 16:12-15

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(June Scripture Readings and Worship Leaders, continued)

JUNE 12

Assisting Minister: Karen Bame
Lay Reader: Melodee Blobaum
Communion Steward: Linda Fox
Crucifer: Ingrid Peterson
Altar Committee: Milan Hanson
Media: Jack Friedrich
Ushers: Tracy & Cece Atherton, Kate Hauber

JUNE 19

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY

First Reading: Isaiah 65:1-9
Psalmody: Psalm 22:19-28
Second Reading: Galatians 3:23-29
Gospel: Luke 8:26-39

Assisting Minister: Connie Benolkin
Lay Reader: Catie Tomlin
Communion Steward: Milan Hanson
Crucifer: Milan Hanson
Altar Committee: Milan Hanson
Media: Linda Fox
Ushers: Chris Roth, Bob Hyland, Jack Friedrich, Kevin Fewell

JUNE 26

First Reading: 1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21
Psalmody: Psalm 16
Second Reading: Galatians 5:1, 13-25
Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

Assisting Minister: Vicki Swanson
Lay Reader: Connie Ross
Communion Steward: Karen Bame
Crucifer: BJ Laven
Altar Committee: Karen Bame, Milan Hanson
Media: Milan Hanson
Ushers: Marc & Patti Winkler, Randy Callstrom

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Here's a look at upcoming events that will take place at Immanuel or via Zoom:



May 27

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
3:30 p.m. World Folk Dancers, Luther Hall

May 29

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
8:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Luther Hall
9:30 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary
10:30 a.m. Refreshments and Fellowship, Luther Hall
10:45 a.m. Adult Forum, Spong
3 p.m. OA-KC, Gathering Space

May 30

MEMORIAL DAY: CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
4 p.m. Youth Chorus Auditions, Sanctuary

May 31

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
6 p.m. Scandinavian Dancers, Luther Hall
7 p.m. Committee for Justice and Peace, Zoom

June 2

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
6:30 p.m. Choral Spectrum, Sanctuary
7 p.m. OA-KC, Sanctuary

June 3

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
3:30 p.m. World Folk Dancers, Luther Hall

June 4

All Day YouthWorks, Gathering Space
8:30 a.m. Altar Guild, Spong

Join An Event Via Zoom

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

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

Visit <https://immanuelkc.org/calendar> to view the full calendar of upcoming events at Immanuel. If you have questions or would like to add an event to the calendar, contact the church office, 816-931-8483 or office@immanuelkc.org.

FROM THE CENTRAL STATES SYNOD: EMERGENCY CLIMATE DECLARATION AND RESPONSE TO THE RECENT SCHOOL SHOOTING



BISHOP SIGNS EMERGENCY CLIMATE DECLARATION

Along with the bishop of the Episcopal Dioceses of Missouri, Central States Synod Bishop Susan Canda has signed an emergency climate declaration that challenges all members of our synod to pursue justice for creation through sufficiency and sustainability actions, learning, deiberation and advocacy. You can view the declaration at [Emergency Climate Declaration | Episcopal Diocese of Missouri \(diocesemo.org\)](#).

RESPONSE TO THE RECENT SCHOOL SHOOTING

From the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America -

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:27).



Gracious God, news of the mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, has ripped our hearts and torn our souls. We are walking through the valley of the shadow of death. In the depths of pain and anger, we come before you, O God, our rock and our refuge. You are our only comfort. You are our only hope. Merciful God, you know the depth of our suffering. We have only begun to mourn those we have lost.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America grieves with the families of the 19 students and two teachers killed in Tuesday's mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Mass shootings in this country during the past two weeks have deepened the wounds of grief and sorrow. This follows the racially motivated shooting of 10 people in Buffalo, N.Y.; the shooting in Laguna Woods, Calif.; and the 27 other school shootings that have occurred in 2022. Many of the shooters have targeted children and older adults — some of the most vulnerable in our society.

We reaffirm our commitment in calling for greater gun safety, including preventing easy access to assault-style weapons and strengthening our federal system of background checks for all gun sales. As people of faith, we hold on to our belief in caring for our neighbors and striving for justice and peace in all the earth.

We ask for continued support for first responders that arrive at a moment's notice and place their lives in harm's way for the sake of others. We ask for continued support for those providing medical, mental and emotional support as we grieve. We lament for those who have perpetrated violence against others. We thank the leaders of the Southwestern Texas Synod responding to the shooting in Uvalde, and for ecumenical and interreligious partners committed to accompanying this community for the long term.

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(Response to the Recent School Shootings, continued)

The ELCA social message Community Violence calls on our church to continue partnering with other religious and community groups in anti-violence initiatives that offer vital spiritual and moral resources, and that replace the fear and violence plaguing our homes, schools, communities and nation with hope and reconciliation. We join with others in pushing to stem the proliferation of guns in our streets, schools and communities, and to end the culture of violence that pervades our media and society.

Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop)

From the Central States Synod -

Our help comes from you, O Lord, who made heaven and earth. In the midst of grief, you are our comfort. In the face of uncertainty, you are our rock. In the wake of tragedy, you are our hope. Even as we weep, we praise, and place our trust in you. We pray in the name of the one who suffered, died and was raised for us, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

That prayer concludes the Service after a Violent Event in the new ELCA hymnal, All Creation Sings. I am struck that we now include this service in our hymnal because these events are becoming all too common in our society. Once again, our children are paying the ultimate price. We are left grappling with how to understand, let alone move forward in the midst of such tragedies. How can we comprehend the incredible grief surrounding the violent death of 19 school children in Texas?

As people of faith, we take our grief, outrage, frustration and despair to God, knowing that God's heart is big enough to contain our grief. God's peace is deep enough to sustain our spirits. God's love is powerful enough to usher in a new way of being community, without hate and violence, without fear and death. We start with prayer, which is what empowers us to act as followers of Jesus for the sake of God's beloved children.

We must move beyond our laments and grief to examine how our own actions, our words and our treatment of others contribute to a society that has become so violent. We must look within ourselves and ask, "How can I participate in building a kinder, gentler, more peaceful society for all?" What is my responsibility? What is my call?"

Whether we are Democrat or Republican, liberal, progressive, conservative or middle of the road, it is time to come together and advocate for sensible gun safety. The right to bear arms can't be a higher priority than the rights of children to go to school and come home safely. We must unite, across political and social divides, to protect our children.

I urge you to write to your government representatives and call upon them to carry out their responsibilities to govern with wisdom and compassion, to be courageous, and to take action to make our society safer for all.

The Service after a Violent Event ends with this charge:

Go out into the world in peace; have courage;
Hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil;
Strengthen the fainthearted;
Support the weak, and help the suffering;
Honor all people; love and serve the Lord,
Rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Susan Candea, Bishop

MORE NEWS TO USE

CAN YOU HELP? OXFORD HOUSE NEEDS RAFFLE ITEMS

The Women of Westport Oxford House, located in Immanuel's former parsonage behind the church, are among other Oxford House residents who are hosting a raffle to raise money to open additional Oxford Houses in Kansas City, to send members to the Oxford House convention, and to cover some everyday expenses.



While Oxford House is part of a non-profit umbrella organization, each house is fully self-supporting and self-sustaining. The houses provide a safe, structured, sober environment for women or men who are recovering from substance abuse.

The Westport Oxford House women request donations of gift cards of any denomination for big-box stores, fast-food or sit-down restaurants, and grocery stores. They also would welcome cash donations. To donate, contact Lance Whitney, Oxford House director of Outreach, 816-550-4786 or lance.whitney@oxfordhouse.org. In response to your donation, you will receive a charitable donation receipt.



BEWARE OF SCAMS

Scammers sometimes pirate the email addresses or phone numbers of people we know to trick us into sending money for special projects or emergencies. A recent scam targeting a few Immanuel members and staff people requested gift card donations, and it appeared to come from Pastor Micah.

Be sure to double-check any such request before you respond.

UKRAINIANS NEED OUR HELP

To date, the war in Ukraine has displaced about 8 million people who now are considered refugees, the economic cost is exorbitant, and the conservative estimate is that more than 4,000 people have been killed, including children.



But through Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR), we can help. LDR is working with companion churches in Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia and Romania, as well as with ecumenical partners such as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis.

Contribute to Eastern European Crisis Response at <https://elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/Our-Impact/Eastern-Europe-Crisis-Response>; 100 percent of your gift will assist those affected in Ukraine and neighboring countries. You also can send checks to Lutheran Disaster Response, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA, 22116-8009.

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(More News to Use, continued)



ARE YOU MISSING SOMETHING? CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE ABOUT WHAT'S LOST AND FOUND

Jewelry. Eye glasses. A CD. Miscellaneous keys. All that and more is in Immanuel's lost-and-found box in the church office. Missing something? Contact office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483.

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Your contributions help Immanuel do its work. You may give by:

- Placing contributions in the offering plate on Sundays.
- Mailing checks to the church, 1700 Westport Road, Kansas City, MO, 64111.
- Donating online through Tithe.ly., <https://signup.tithe.ly/>
- Setting up an automatic payment through your financial institution.



Additional ways to support Immanuel include Amazon Smile, <https://smile.amazon.com/> — simply register, and Amazon will donate a percentage of what you spend to Immanuel. Thank you for giving to Immanuel! Questions? Please contact the church office.

THINKING OF ONE ANOTHER

Your prayers, calls, notes and cards can brighten someone's day.

Members of Immanuel

Rick Crawford, Andree Cuthbertson, Pat Durie, Ann Erickson, Peg Himebaugh, Naomi Karmeier, Dottie Keough, Carmen Norris, Betty Pera, Deanne Schlehuber, EB Walker and Carolyn Wilson



Friends of Immanuel

Erin Baker, family of Jean Nuernberger
Karen Brooks, sister of Beth Callstrom
Baby Cruz and the Brown Family, family of Jean Nuernberger
James, Jim and Ethel Clanin, family of Lori Clanin
Family & Friends of Camille Engler, sister of Sally Baehni
Normajeane Holtje, cousin of Mike Ortmann
Shelley Johnson, niece of Karole Jacobsen
Betty Kueker, mother of Terry Kueker
Steve & Mary Lucht, friends of Bill & Mary Jo Moore
Dale & Kay Mowbray, friends of Deanne Schlehuber
Nancy's mother, friend of Linda Setterburg
Ken & Rose Nuernberger, family of Jean Nuernberger
Beth Shepard, sister of Patti Winkler
Janet & Randy Spicer, friends of Mary Lynn Coleman-Renoe
Pam Staggs, sister of Connie Ross
Women of Westport Oxford House, friends of Immanuel

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(Thinking of One Another, continued)

If you would like to add someone to or remove someone from the prayer list, contact the church office. Names will remain on the list for three months unless you indicate otherwise.

Email ImmanuelKCPrayerTeam@gmail.com to request prayer for someone who does not wish to appear on the public list.

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS

6/2 Mary Ann Ciochon

6/4 Kai McCarter

6/6 Adam Rouse

6/8 William Gassen

6/11 Lori Clanin

6/12 Lisa Thomsen

6/16 Jordan Hirsekorn

6/17 Samantha Ellerbeck

6/18 Mike Boehmer

6/19 Rick Crawford

6/20 Lisa Hansen

6/21 Karin Johnson

6/23 Lydia Thomsen

6/26 Sara Wu

6/27 Elizabeth Hastings

6/27 Mike Kennedy

6/28 Elise Gassen

6/29 Kate Hauber

6/30 Roger Gieschen

6/30 Roland Pera

IMMANUEL LEADERSHIP

STAFF

Rev. Micah Sievenpiper, pastor

msievenpiper@gmail.com

Suzanne Anderson, music director

suzanneandersonilc@gmail.com

Robert Barthel, organist

Robert.Barthel@hotmail.com

Linda Fewell, administrative assistant

office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483

Phillip Cooper, building superintendent

pcoopq@yahoo.com or 816-666-2468

COUNCIL

Connie Benolkin, president

Bonnie Thomas, vice president

Melodee Blobaum, secretary

Kathy Linder, treasurer

Linda Fox, financial secretary

Henrik Andersen

Randy Callstrom

Mason Carey

Elizabeth Hastings

Lynden Peters

Sara Prem

Scott Thompson

PARISH NEWS

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www.immanuelkc.org

office@immanuelkc.org

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