

**A New Journey Lutheran Parish**

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Ness Lutheran Church  
Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
Gary Lutheran Church  
PO Box 96  
Gary, MN 56545

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**APRIL 2023**



## SCAM ALERT (by Pastor René)

In early March, some people received an unusual email from Pastor Keith Zeh, that read:

“Blessings!”

“Do you have a moment? I do have a request for you, let me know if you got free time.”

This was NOT sent from Pastor Keith. It was a phishing scam, an attempt by scammers to lure church members to respond to the request. Sometimes it includes a specific request like purchasing gift cards.

The scammers often have the local pastor’s (or even the bishop’s) name and an email address that looks legitimate. But looking carefully, the email address is from a provider different than the one the church typically uses or a variation in the pastor’s actual email address. For example, the sender’s name may look correct but is missing a single letter. In the new version, the phishers use text messaging to try and fill up the collection plate in their favor.

So, if you get an email or text that you’re suspicious about, what should you do? According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) that works with these situations, they recommend the following:

1. Don’t email or text back to the message received. Legitimate companies won’t ask you to verify your identity through unsecured channels, like text or email. If it doesn’t sound like the person you know, it probably isn’t.
2. Don’t click on any links within the message. Links can install malware on your device and take you to spoof sites to try to get your information.
3. Report the message to your cell phone carrier’s spam text reporting number. If you’re an AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint, or Bell customer, you can forward the text to 7726 (SPAM) free of charge. The best advice might be to forward any suspicious emails or texts to the FTC at <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/>.

One last note: as mentioned before, if you get anything that doesn't sound like the person you know, DO NOT OPEN OR RESPOND TO THE MESSAGE. Carefully look at the email. Delete it immediately and if an email, empty the trash. If you are wondering about the message, contact the person directly but not by replying to the message you received. Also, please let the person know as they may not know this is happening.

I often wonder the possible good the world is missing as people use their energy and effort on these scams instead of trying to make the world a better place. We are called to help our neighbors in need, and unfortunately we may need to verify that first.

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## *“Good Gossip”*

We don't share GOOD things we do as much as we share gossip, so each month we've been lifting up some good ministry being done in and through our Parish.



Did you know that Gary Lutheran Church sponsors a child through Compassion International? His name is Angel; he is currently 14 years old and lives in Ghana. Gary Lutheran has been his sponsor since 2015 when he began Kindergarten. He is active in Sunday School/Church, Bible Class, playing sports, and does well in school, with his favorite subjects being art and math. His family duties are listed as “carries Water, cleaning, running errands.” His latest picture showed that he spent his monetary birthday gift from us to buy drinks that he helped his mother sell to make more money. You are encouraged to keep Angel and his family in your prayers this

month. If you would like more information about how you could be a life-changing sponsor for a child, talk to Katie or Pr. René, or visit [compassion.com](http://compassion.com).

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## ***A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR RENÉ L. MEHLBERG...***

*“Sharing the hope that we find in Christ and the roadmap for a happy and healthy life.”*

Dear Beloved Children of God:

Recently, I was re-reading the documents that helped form A New Journey Lutheran Parish. The quote above is ANJLP’s “why.” The “why” we are together. The “why” we do what we do. The “why” that leads to the “what” of us “to spread the love and promises of God to our neighbors, our communities, and our congregations.”

This then leads to the “how.” How do we share that hope that we know with others? How do we spread the love and promises of God?

Sharing Christ’s hope and spreading God’s love is something each congregation has done since its beginning. And yet, what does that mean for us now, both as individual congregations decades and generations later AND collectively as a brand-new parish?

It is something we are living into and are figuring out. It is something we do personally as we move throughout the world each day, and it is something we do collectively as a church and parish. Perhaps it means traveling a bit more to help a congregation out with a new idea. Perhaps it means supporting a community member or family further from your backyard, but who is in our mission field, as they are a neighbor in need. Perhaps it’s being open to something new we have not yet tried as a parish, especially if it is out and about in the community.

The hope we have in Christ is made possible in the complete Easter story we will soon hear. Holy Week reminds us that even Jesus, God in the flesh, experienced all the highs and lows that we do as well. Jesus died so we may have life and have life abundantly. Jesus defeated death so we may live. We must remember that happy and healthy isn’t all the days of this life. But perhaps the hope we carry, that Jesus modeled and taught us to do as well, is that we are not alone. When life is anything but happy and healthy, God’s presence is with us and we must be with one another.

May God guide us and grant us courage on this journey~

Pastor René

## A MESSAGE FROM KATIE DEMARAIS, SAM...



### A PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

*"Won't you revive us again, so your people can rejoice in you?"*  
— Psalm 85:6 (NLT)

Jesus Messiah, we profess that You are Lord and we long to see every knee bow and every tongue confess. Revive us again. Revive our hearts, our families, our churches, our cities, our nation. Let Your Spirit move in this place and equip your church to be the light to the lost. Amen.

On March 19, a group of folks from the corners of our Parish gathered at the movies. Jesus Revolution is a film depicting the real, historical events and people surrounding the Jesus Movement of the 1970s. "In the 1970s, young Greg Laurie (Joel Courtney) is searching for all the right things in all the wrong places: until he meets Lonnie Frisbee (Jonathan Roumie), a charismatic hippie-street-preacher. Together with Pastor Chuck Smith (Kelsey Grammer), they open the doors of Smith's languishing church to an unexpected revival of radical and newfound love, leading to what TIME Magazine dubbed a JESUS REVOLUTION." The part of the film that stood out to me most was once Pastor Chuck Smith invited Lonnie Frisbee into his church, more and more hippie folks showed up. Elders from the church grew concerned that these hippies were going to take over their church, and one piped up with a concern, "They come in barefoot. We just put new carpet down last year!" (paraphrased) So, Pr. Smith bows down to the concerned elders. He literally bows down. The next scene is him, on his knees with a bowl of water and a towel, washing the bare feet of every flower child coming into the church. What a powerful reminder of what we are called to do!

I left that theater filled with motivation (and I'll admit, a touch of jealousy). What it must have been like to have been a part of that movement. To have witnessed hundreds of people being baptized daily in the ocean waters. I want to be a part of a movement like that. Luckily for me, I am a part of a movement: A New Journey Lutheran Parish. We have God on our side, to shepherd us, and we have the passion, gifts, and willing disciples to be able to enact real ministry that brings people to Jesus. If we listen to where God is calling us, and we open our eyes to the people in our communities who are hungry for something, even if they don't know yet that it is Jesus they are seeking. Together, I truly believe, we can continue this Jesus Revolution HERE!

***A MESSAGE FROM RACHEL ROGGENBUCK...***

***ANJLP Worship Life Coordinator***

This Lenten season our Wednesday worship services focused on change. Change of season, change of habit, change of circumstance, change of heart and change of plans. Change can be hard. But the results of change are usually amazing! I know we are all waiting for the seasons to change from SNOW to spring and all the light, warmth and activity that will come with it. In the last year, we started a change of habit. Worshipping outside the walls of our churches to meet people where they are, sharing the love Jesus has for us and for them. This will continue in 2023! Our change of circumstance comes as we continue to grow into what it means to be a parish....together. During all of these activities and time together, I have observed a change of heart. This change has brought energy to churches, and the parish! Our plans are always changing, but the thing that does not change is the love we have for Jesus. The love he has for us. The mission we share to tell of that love to everyone we meet!

Rachel  
ANJLP Worship Life Coordinator

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***Minutes - A New Journey Parish Special Council Meeting***

(6:30 p.m. on March 15, 2023, at Immanuel Lutheran, Bejou, MN)

Council members present: Jim Steinmetz, Karen Carlsrud, Stacey Knudson, Peggy Hanson, Teresa Werpy, Mary Preisler and Wanda Stordahl. Others in attendance: Pastor René Mehlberg, Katie DeMarais, Rachel Roggenbuck, Mike Nelson and Sue Gunderson.

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Steinmetz followed by devotions led by Mary Preisler.

Secretary's report: Minutes were distributed and it was decided to continue to include complete minutes in our monthly parish newsletter. Motion was made by Mary, seconded by Wanda and carried, to approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held February 15, 2023.

Treasurer's report: Reports were distributed and reviewed by Mike in Jill's absence. Motion was made by Peggy, seconded by Teresa and carried, to approve reports as presented.

**Staff report:**

Pastor René reported she has moved and is getting settled into a home east of Bejou. She noted that she will be away on Sunday, March 19, and Rachel will be filling in for her. Pastor also reviewed the worship schedule for Holy Week.

Katie gave a confirmation report and indicated that she plans to have a First Communion class at Immanuel following worship service on Palm Sunday. She also noted that they are working on worship coverage for Palm Sunday. Katie indicated that the cost of her required mentor Pastor Laurie Albertson is \$75 per month. A motion was made by Karen, seconded by Mary and carried, to pay the mentor fees for Katie.

Rachel indicated a worship team meeting will be scheduled to discuss and plan spring and summer activities. She reported that the “outside our walls” audio/visual equipment has been ordered and will be delivered to her home where it will be kept until further notice. Guidelines for the use of the equipment are being developed. Rachel also reported that Sunday, April 30, is the fifth Sunday of the month and ideas are being considered as to how to make the fifth Sunday worship services special. Discussion followed on having joint worship services on the fifth Sundays of a month and it was decided to have it at Immanuel in April, at McIntosh in July and at Gary/Ness in October.

**Old Business:**

Council members were reminded to continue work on updating their membership numbers as October 1 is the deadline set for providing that information, which will determine each congregation’s 2024 financial obligations to the Parish budget.

It was noted that Ness Lutheran is still working on getting a second representative to serve on the Parish Council.

**New Business:**

Wanda mentioned that Thrivent has funds available for congregations and Thrivent members. Discussion was held on how some of those funds have been and can be used.

**Other Business:**

Discussion was held on fundraising, both as individual congregations and as a parish, and other ways to build relationships by working together.

For parish membership reference, it was noted that the April newsletter will include a list, with contact information, of Parish Council members, as well as congregational officers.

The next ANJLP Parish Council meeting was scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at Immanuel Lutheran, Bejou. The meeting adjourned.

Sue Gunderson, Parish Secretary



## *News from Gary Lutheran...*

### **Gary Lutheran Council Meeting Minutes-Sunday, March 19, 2023**

The council meeting of the Gary Lutheran Church was held on Sunday, March 19, following 10:30 a.m. worship with Bonnie Werpy, Peggy Hanson, Jenny Lien, Carrie Heisler, Gene Hanson, Gene Werpy, Teresa Werpy, Karen Tadych, Stacy Gunderson and Katie DeMarais in attendance.

President Bonnie Werpy called the meeting to order. The secretary's report was read and approved. Carrie Heisler presented the treasurer's report which showed a balance at the end of February of \$40,349.76. The treasurer's report was approved. Jill Nelson will continue to do the payroll and taxes for the church.

Old Business: The sound system was discussed. Carrie moved to have Katie go forward with getting an estimate from the company that worked with Immanuel and Our Savior's, motion carried.

New Business: It was decided to add one or two extra familiar hymns to each service. Bonnie suggested we post flyers with information about our congregations and when we worship in public places to reach more families without a congregation. Katie will make up a poster and council members will deliver them. Befrienders is sponsoring a fundraiser for the Hendrickson family on Sunday, April 23. Peggy is the Thrivent advocate this year. She will work on coming up with a list of Thrivent members. Katie asked for approval to get the old computer fixed in order to get statistical information off of there and converted to a newer computer program. Gene Hanson moved to get the old computer fixed, second by Carrie and carried.

The meeting adjourned.

Jenny Lien, Secretary

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### **Additional Gary Info:**

- We are looking for all Thrivent members. If you are a Thrivent member, please contact Peggy Hanson (218-766-4821, [Genepeggyhanson@gmail.com](mailto:Genepeggyhanson@gmail.com)) or Carrie Heisler ([c.l.heisler@outlook.com](mailto:c.l.heisler@outlook.com), 701-412-5023).
- The Gary Sunday School will be singing in Church at 8:30 a.m. on Palm Sunday, April 2. Please have your children to the church by 8:15 a.m. We will have coffee/juice and cookies after services. No Sunday School to follow.



There will be No Sunday School on Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday Services at Gary will be at 7:00 a.m. Sunday School resumes Sunday, April 16.

- Message from Carrie Heisler: *I personally want to thank everyone for your great response and willingness to be on church council. Everyone has gifts to share, so if you aren't able to be on a council board, and still want to do something, there are many opportunities. Please feel free to reach out to church or me personally if you have an idea or something you want to be a part of. I wasn't able to reach everyone, and I apologize if I didn't contact you and you want to help. Please just speak up, and we will find a place for your talents. We could use readers, greeters, ushers, befrienders. Always grateful for everyone giving of their time and talent. I look forward to a wonderful, fun-filled, joyful, and blessed year. Thanks again everyone. You made my job easy.*

Carrie Heisler

[c.l.heisler@outlook.com](mailto:c.l.heisler@outlook.com)

### **Altar Guild, Usher/Greeters and Janitor Assignments**

- Gary Lutheran Church Ushers/Greeters, including any midweek services in their timeframe. (NOTE: Please plug in lamp prior to service & unplug after services.):
  - April 2: Curt & Candy Robertson
  - April 9-16: Stacy & Kathy Stene
  - April 23-30: Merlyn Meyer & Wayne Bekkerus
- Gary Lutheran Altar Guild for April: Jenny Lien & Peggy Hanson

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### ***News from Our Savior's...***

#### **Our Savior's Council Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2023**

Meeting called to order by President Wanda Stordahl.

Marilyn Graff made a motion and seconded it by Jane Aakhus to approve February minutes, motion passed. The financial reports from January and February were reviewed and motion was made by Marilyn Graff and seconded it by Jane Aakhus to approve it.

Stacey Knudson gave an update on the parsonage.

Wanda Stordahl gave the parish update. On April 30<sup>th</sup> there will be one service for the entire parish at Immanuel. Our Savior's will host it on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in July. That date is July 30<sup>th</sup>. More information to follow on this when the date gets closer.

On April 16<sup>th</sup> we will be having a contemporary service as Rachel will be gone on this date. Cindy, Tanya, Jane, Wanda and Rachel will all work on planning this service together.

We will host a Memorial Day Dinner fundraiser at the community center following the Memorial Day service in McIntosh.

Anita Roy will verify that all the summer mowing is lined up with our mowers.

Marilyn Graff made a motion and seconded it by Jane Aakhus to approve confirmation for Kalli Roy on Sunday, May 14, during church services. The church will buy a cake for her.

Anita Roy will check at Jered's Grocery to see if he is getting in any Easter flowers and if he is she will pick them up from him. If you would like to order an Easter flower in memory or in honor of someone, please let Anita know at 563-3495.

Motion by Jane Aakhus and seconded it by Marilyn Graff to adjourn the meeting. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

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## *News from Immanuel...*

### **Summary of March 15, 2023, Immanuel Council Meeting Minutes**

Council members present: Jim Steinmetz, Peggy Gunderson, Gloria Steinbrenner, Cindy Large, Jon Large, Darrell Lende, Terry McCollum, Duane Gunderson, Joyce Bendickson and Delane Schaumburg. Others in attendance: Pastor René Mehlberg, Katie DeMarais and Rachel Roggenbuck.

Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were provided and approved. Action was taken to reinvest some Immanuel funds.

Pastor reported that the monthly newsletter would include a list of Parish and congregational council members. We also plan on including church fundraisers and dinners on the monthly calendar.

Katie reported that First Communion Classes will be held at Immanuel on Palm Sunday and confirmation at Immanuel will be held May 7. She thanked all the volunteer Confirmation mentors.

Rachel noted that April 30 is the fifth Sunday of the month and one joint worship service will be held at Immanuel. She reported that the approved audio/visual equipment has been ordered and will be delivered to her. Rachel is planning to attend Lay Ministry training and the Council authorized paying for that training.

Old Business:

- It was decided to give our Lenten Service offering to the Henriksen Family Benefit (Gary area).
- Tickets for the upcoming Auction Raffle will soon be available for selling.
- Easter Sunday Service will be held at Immanuel at 8:30 a.m. Good Friday Service will be held at Immanuel at 3:00 p.m.
- A small group is updating Immanuel's membership list.

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**Additional Immanuel Info:**

- Immanuel's Mother & Daughter Brunch will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 15. Tickets can be purchased at the door and all are welcome!
- Ladies' Aid will hold their monthly supper on Wednesday, April 19, serving from 4:00-6:30 p.m. and the meal cost is a free will offering. Servers are Sue Steinmetz, Linda Lende and Donna Radtke. (Note: Confirmation at 6:00 p.m., worship service at 7 p.m. & Immanuel Council meeting at 8 p.m.)

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**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION**  
**1ST COMMUNION CLASS**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 2**  
**1-4PM**

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, BEJOU**

*A New Journey Lutheran Parish*  
Gary, Immanuel, Ness, & Our Savior's Lutheran Churches

A NEW JOURNEY LUTHERAN PARISH  
SCHEDULE FOR PALM SUNDAY APRIL 2

**8:30 a.m. – Worship at Gary Luth. Church**

**8:30 a.m. – Worship at Immanuel L. Church**

**9:30 a.m. – Sunday School at Immanuel &  
Gary**

**10:30 a.m. – Worship at Our Savior's Lutheran  
Church**

**10:30 a.m. – Worship at Ness Lutheran Church**

ALL ARE WELCOME

*Maundy Thursday Worship*

7:00pm Gary Lutheran Church  
(with First Communion)

*Good Friday Worship*

3:00pm Immanuel Lutheran Church  
7:00pm Our Savior's Lutheran Church



*A New  
Journey*  
Lutheran Parish



*Sunday, April 9*

# *Easter Sunday Worship*

**6:45am – Sunrise Worship at Our Savior’s Luth. Church**

**7:00am – Sunrise Worship at Gary Lutheran Church**

**8:30am – Worship at Immanuel Lutheran Church**

**9:00am – Worship at Ness Lutheran Church**

**10:30am – Worship at Sundal Lutheran Church**

**10:30am – Worship at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church**



*A New  
Journey*  
Lutheran Parish

## Youth Group



Open to all 6-12 Graders.

All are welcome. Bring a friend!

Come solve your way out of an Easter-Themed Escape Room! Hang out with church friends, have some snacks, and learn about Jesus and his experience!

**Sunday, April 23**

**5:00-7:00pm**

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**

## Church Ladies' Night Out



All ladies are welcome! Bring a friend!  
Each month we will gather at a local restaurant for food, fellowship, and fun.

**Tuesday, April 25**

**6:30pm**

**Peachy's Pub, Bejou  
(Formally Stump's)**

## Wednesday Night Worship

Wednesday, April 19~ 7:00pm

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Ladies Aid Supper served from 4:00-6:30pm

Confirmation Class 6pm

All are welcome to the  
Wednesday Night Worship!  
The Word proclaimed! Music sang!  
Fellowship shared!

A NEW JOURNEY LUTHERAN PARISH

## Family May Day Event



Sunday, April 30 ~ 1:00-3:00pm ~ Our Savior's L. Church

All families are invited to come for an afternoon of family fun and sharing in church family fellowship.

We will be making May Day Baskets (to deliver to neighbors for May Day the next day)!

This is a free event and will include everything needed.

Please RSVP to Anita by Apr 25, so we can have supplies ready.

**ALL FAMILIES OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME.**

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**PARISH PRAYER LIST**

***Brady Bauer, Jessie Beckman, Shawn Bendickson, Susan Bendickson, Ron Dahl, Alex Gullingsrud, Ann (Wastweet) Kukowski, Pat Larson, Violet Lee, Donna Lisburg, Julia (Pantaleo) Madoll, Gwen Meyer, Marla (Johnson) Miller, Kathy Motteberg, Marilyn Natwick, Stacey Prestegord, Anita Slater and Jean Uhlir.***

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<b>Ministers:</b>	<b>Members of the Congregations</b>
	<b>Pastor René Mehlberg (218) 308-7898</b> <a href="mailto:pastor.rene.mehlberg@gmail.com">pastor.rene.mehlberg@gmail.com</a>
<b>Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM)</b>	<b>Katie DeMarais (218) 820-8287 or</b> <a href="mailto:demarais.katie@gmail.com">demarais.katie@gmail.com</a>
<b>Worship Life Coordinator:</b>	<b>Rachel Roggenbuck (701) 741-0976 or</b> <a href="mailto:athomerachel@gmail.com">athomerachel@gmail.com</a>
<b>ANJLP Secretary:</b>	<b>Sue Gunderson (218) 280-8678 or</b> <a href="mailto:immanuel@gvtel.com">immanuel@gvtel.com</a>
<b>Gary/Ness Secretary:</b>	<b>Julie Gevik (218) 280-3356 or</b> <a href="mailto:garyrindaloffice@gmail.com">garyrindaloffice@gmail.com</a>
<b>Our Savior's Secretary:</b>	<b>Anita Roy (218) 849-3791 or</b> <a href="mailto:oursaviors@gvtel.com">oursaviors@gvtel.com</a>
<b>Parish Website:</b>	<b><a href="http://anewjourneyparish.org">anewjourneyparish.org</a></b>
<b>Find Us Online:</b>	<b><a href="https://linktr.ee/anewjourneyparish">linktr.ee/anewjourneyparish</a></b>



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## APRIL 2023 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

WORSHIP	IMMANUEL (Bejou)	OUR SAVIOR'S (McIntosh)	GARY	NESS	SUNDAL
<b>Palm Sunday, April 2</b> (purple) Communion	8:30 am - Worship 9:30 am - Sunday School	10:30 am - Worship	8:30 am – Worship	10:30 am - Worship	
<b>Maundy Thurs., April 6</b> (purple)			6:00 pm – Soup & Sandwich 7:00 pm - Worship		
<b>Good Friday, April 7</b> (blank)	3:00 pm - Worship	7:00 pm - Worship			
<b>Easter Sunday, April 9</b> (white) Communion	8:30 am – Worship	6:45 am – Worship & refreshments 10:30 am - Worship	7:00 am – Worship & refreshments	9:00 am - Worship	10:30 am - Worship
<b>Sunday, April 16</b> (white) Communion	8:30 am – Worship 9:30 am – Sunday School	10:30 am - Worship	9:30 am – Sunday School 10:30 am – Worship with Confirmation		
<b>Wed., April 19</b> (white)	7:00 pm – Worship				
<b>Sunday, April 23</b> (white)	8:30 am – Worship	10:30 am - Worship	8:30 am – Worship 9:30 am – Sunday School	10:30 am - Worship	
<b>Sunday, April 30</b> (white)	10:00 am – Joint Worship				