

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 2024



PARISH PRAYER LIST

PARISH PRAYER LIST: Harry Aanden, Jessie Beckman, Shawn Bendickson, Ron Dahl, Denise Halland, Kurt Halvorson, Diane Hamre, Sherry Jensrud, Nathan Kearns, Rosie Keller, Cindy (Wastweet) Kiester, Ann (Wastweet) Kukowski, Violet Lee, Donna Lisburg, Julia (Pantaleo) Madoll, Gwen Meyer, Barb Miller, Randy Moen, Marilyn Natwick, Keith Olson, Nick & April Ostenaa family, David Pinske, Franklyn Preisler, Susan Ruud, Anita Slater, Charles Svalen, Gina Tiokasin, and Eileen Tommervik. Condolences to the family and friends of Mary Wastweet (Sundal) who passed away March 7.

Prestegord Family Benefit

Benefit will be held on Sunday, April 7, from 10:30am-1:30pm at the Twin Valley Community Center. Proceeds will help the Verona Prestegord Family to offset expenses of medical and monthly bills. Pasta bar and silent auction to be held.

On the west side of the parish, worship will be 8:30am at Ness. No worship or Sunday School at Gary that day. Please go support the Prestegord family and friends at this event as you are able as you continue to keep them in prayer.

“Good Gossip”

We don’t share the GOOD things we do as much as we share gossip, so each month we lift up some good ministry being done throughout the Parish.

The Win-E-Mac (WEM) Community Youth Ministry began last fall by a group of moms from the WEM school district. The idea is to welcome middle and high school youth together from all churches for a larger more exciting youth group. They try to meet monthly with a rotation of service, worship, and fun all rooted in God’s love and goodness.

With WEM as part of the parish, Pastor René met some of the leaders and attended the February gathering to learn more about the group. She has been invited

into the planning group, which includes Pastor Pam from Grace Lutheran in Erskine to offer support, encouragement, prayers, and some deeper theology knowledge when asked.

As we are able, ANJLP will share WEM Community Youth Ministry opportunities for our youth and families. We promoted a movie on Palm Sunday at the Fosston Theater. There's a service opportunity on Saturday, April 27, for Feed My Starving Children in Grand Forks from Noon-2:00pm. This is an opportunity for family and friends to be involved to help package meals for children/families in need. Pastor René will be going and can take 4 youth. There are only 34 spots total, so if you want to attend, contact Pastor René ASAP (and by April 5) to get on the list. This will be the April ANJLP Youth Group Gathering.

You can follow WEM Community Youth Ministry on Facebook to stay in touch with the group. Feel free to talk with Pastor René about the group, and watch for hopefully more opportunities to come.

This is a great example of how the Spirit is moving in our mission field and how we can be part of it as well. We'll see where it may lead, as we continue to pay attention to what else it might be stirring up as well! Perhaps even inside of you!

And, if **YOU** have an idea for an upcoming "Good Gossip" column, let Katie or Pastor René know. We'd love to hear from you on what's happening in your neighborhood.

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:

The quote above is A New Journey Lutheran Parish's (ANJLP) why. The "why" we are a parish. The "why" leads to the "what" of us "to spread the love and promises of God to our neighbors, our communities, and our congregations."

This leads to the "how." How do we share that hope we know with others? How do we spread the love and promises of God? We do this through worship in formal and informal ways and loving our neighbors. Even with that answer you may be asking, "how" once more. Here are some examples.

- Formal worship: Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, other special services inside or outside the church.
- Informal worship: Ladies Night Out, Worship Outside the Walls (WOW) activities, Youth Group Events.

- Loving our neighbors: Family Playdate, Meals open to the community, Blessing Boxes and Food Shelf drives, praying for one another, surrounding those in times of life transitions.

I know you have even more examples. And now, I invite you to pause. To take a breath and, “Be still and know that God is God.” Or as Katie writes in her article: “Less Hustle. More Jesus.”

We live in a society and culture that often thinks more is better. But more often doesn’t lead to a happier and healthier life. More often leads to more hustle, less Jesus, and sheer exhaustion.

As individuals making up your church and this collective parish, what is the hope you have in Christ that you want to share with others? What is the happy and healthy life God desires for us and all? How do we share God’s love and promises with everyone we meet? And perhaps instead of thinking of big grand plans and programs, we start small and tangible: a smile, an invitation, a kind word.

Our Lenten worship services ended with The Prayer of Good Courage, reminding us that God is with us. Perhaps it is a prayer we need to keep praying as we continue finding our way as individuals, as church communities, as a parish.

The Prayer of Good Courage

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

~from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship book, page 304

May you pause, breathe, pray, and feel God’s presence with you each and every day~

Pastor René

A MESSAGE FROM KATIE DEMARAIS, SAM...

“But the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it.” ~ Exodus 20:10-12

Less Hustle. More Jesus. Even God rested after working really hard to create the world. God commanded us to rest in the Sabbath times as well. I want to encourage us all to slow down, hustle less, and listen more. We need to be less concerned with DOING things and more with LISTENING and DISCERNING what we are called to do. We need to spend time in Bible study, Worship, and prayer. And then, even more time being still and listening. Maybe keeping your eyes open for signs, if you are like me, and feel God speaks to you through small signs.

God knows you better than you know yourself, and God knows how to get your attention. God knows how you are open to receiving the Holy Spirit, and God knows whether you respond to certain Scripture passages that pop out to you. God knows whether you respond more to a spoken message from someone you hear. God knows whether you pray and then listen for a voice in your heart to guide you.

Just as God knows that I respond to little signs. I want to challenge us all to live by those words during the next few weeks and months: Less Hustle. More Jesus. We have worked so hard in our respective congregations and the Parish the last few years, and even the few prior, to keep our churches running, to call a Pastor, to DO all the ministry. I want to congratulate you on the great job you've all been doing at keeping ministry happening.

We seem to have been go, go, going, but I want to invite us for these next few months to slow way down, hustle less, and listen way more. This Parish will only succeed if we are willing to work at it, and by work I mean work LESS and open our eyes, ears, and hearts to that still, small voice that God will use to direct us into the future of our ministry together. We have been trying to do all this and figure out all this on our own these last few years. We have tried to just forge ahead the best way we know how, but how much time have we actually spent in prayer and discernment? I'm not sure the answer for you, but for me, that answer is 'not enough.'

We have a unique opportunity in this Parish, and we have been given a leader and a plan so that we may slow down, study, pray, and listen to God's voice. I am confident that if we do these things, and do less other things, we will find ourselves ready to engage in ministry in the exact way God is preparing for us. Amen

Your sister in Christ, Katie

A MESSAGE FROM RACHEL ROGGENBUCK, SAM...

This Lenten season our Wednesday worship services focused on Seeing God—seeing God in songs, stories, people, movies and memes. This focus encouraged me, and I hope you, to slow down and really feel the possibilities that Jesus may be

whispering in your ear. For us to observe how we can impact others and our world by sharing what we see and feel. This can be hard. It may be a change from how we are living out the gospel. Since our time together as a parish we have planned and enjoyed some amazing events--worshiping outside the walls of our sanctuaries. Our WOW (Worship Outside the Walls) team will meet again in April to evaluate what we have done in the past and plan future times to worship together. There is energy here. You ARE listening to the words whispered in your ear by the Holy Spirit to take action. Take action to look outward beyond our walls, meet people where they are. See God in ALL of the places. All are welcome to attend the WOW meeting at Immanuel on April 11 at 6:30 p.m.

Your servant in Christ,
Rachel Roggenbuck, SAM

Minutes - A New Journey Parish Council Meeting
(6:30 p.m. on March 11, 2024, at Immanuel Lutheran, Bejou, MN)

Council members present: Jim Steinmetz, Mary Preisler, Marilyn Graff, Kristi Skeie, Karen Carlsrud and Teresa Werpy. Others: Pastor René Mehlberg, Rachel Roggenbuck, Bonnie Werpy and Sue Gunderson.

Jim called the meeting to order and Pastor René led devotions, which included a get-to-know-members session, and prayer.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the February 12, 2024, meeting were distributed and reviewed. Motion by Mary, second by Marilyn and carried, to approve minutes of the February 12, 2024, meeting as presented.

Treasurer's Report: In Jill's absence, there was no report provided.

Staff Reports:

Pastor René covered the following:

- Busy time for all staff now during Lent.
- A group of mothers from the Win-E-Mac school district have established a Luther League type youth group. Pastor René has connected with the moms, attended one event, and is looking how we can support one another in ministry.
- After Easter, there is a plan to do a parish-wide digital ministry audit for our use when working on our 2025 parish budget. Some members voiced their opinions on our taped worship services and it was noted that the information will be considered as part of the upcoming audit.

Rachel covered the following:

- A Worship Outside the Walls (WOW) meeting will be held in April to discuss ideas for summer/fall activities.
- Immanuel has decided to pay the parish's Sparkhouse subscription for 2024.

Old Business:

- Memorial Day weekend worship services were discussed. Immanuel indicated they would have service. Our Savior's and Ness noted they would not have worship. Gary has yet to meet.
- Fifth Sunday joint worship services were also discussed. Our Savior's plans to have worship in the McIntosh Park on June 30. September 29 will be at Gary with Gary and Ness hosting; and Immanuel will host December 29.
- Jim noted that the Catholic Church in Beaulieu has a fall fundraiser that includes a dinner and a raffle that raises a lot of money for their church. In 2023, the raffle included 40 cash prizes ranging from \$500 to \$25 that were donated.

New Business:

- It was noted that there is a Prestegord family benefit scheduled for April 7 at Twin Valley.

The next ANJLP Council meeting will be held Monday, April 15, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel.

Mary made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Sue Gunderson, Parish Secretary

News from Gary Lutheran...

NOTE: No worship or Sunday School at Gary on April 7 due to the Prestegord Family Benefit.

Gary Lutheran Council Meeting Highlights from Sunday, March 17

Members Present: Bonnie Werpy, Gene Werpy, Jill Nelson, Lori Thronson, Peggy Hanson, Teresa Werpy, Karen Tadych. Other: Pastor René Mehlberg

- Secretary and Treasurer reports given and approved.
- Lori and Pastor René are working with Liberty to close the copier contract. A new stand-alone printer, copier, scanner has been bought and ready to go.
- M/S/P to approve Sound System work based on the estimate received.
- No worship at Gary on Sunday, May 25 (Memorial Day Weekend).
- Report by the FUNdraising and Fellowship committee members.
- Asking for people's thoughts for summer worship opportunities in Gary.
- May 5 is last Sunday for Sunday School.

- May 12 Senior Quilts will be given.
- Next council meeting is Sunday, May 19 following 10:30 worship.

Update from the FUNdraising and Fellowship Committee

A letter went to all Gary members in February. The committee will meet Monday, April 8. The members would love to hear your thoughts and ideas for FUNdaising and Fellowship events. Members include Lori Thronson, Jenny Lien, Mike Nelson, Teresa Werpy, Katie DeMarais, and Pastor René.

We are praying to fully fund the entire GLC budget through auto-pay giving by the end of 2024. If interested in this or need more information, contact Mike Nelson.

Summer Worship Thoughts--Your Ideas Wanted

Council members and parish staff leadership want to hear your thoughts in regards to summer worship. The “west side” of the parish (Gary, Ness, and Sundal) will have one Sunday morning worship throughout the summer, rotating between the three. And, we know that many are out enjoying family, friends, and God’s creation during this time. Last year we had Wednesday night outdoor worship and Sunday night worship, with moderate success. So, we’d like to hear from you! Share your summer worship thoughts of time or place with council leadership or Pastor René and will see what’s possible.

Altar Guild, Usher/Greeters and Janitor Assignments:

- Gary Lutheran Church Ushers/Greeters, including any midweek services in their timeframe. (NOTE: Please check to make sure the red Christ Candle gets extinguished after each service.):
 - April 7-14: Ray & Stacy Gunderson
 - April 21-28: Errol & Deb Miller
- Gary Lutheran Altar Guild for March: Jenny Lien and Peggy Hanson

News from Our Savior’s...

March 10th, 2024 Council Meeting

-Council members present were Jane Aakhus, Marilyn Graff, Kristi Skeie, Dave Stordahl & Wanda Stordahl, via phone-Gordie Ostenaar. Others in attendance were Pastor René Mehlberg and Anita Roy.

-Meeting called to order by President Wanda Stordahl. Devotions were given by Pastor René Mehlberg.

-February minutes approved.

Dave gave the Financial Report. Marilyn Graff motion to approve financial report and 2nd it by Jane Aakhus.

Old Business

- Anita gave an update about what was in the safety deposit box.
- Parsonage report-Still waiting on appraisal.
- Kristi went over everything for Memorial Day fundraiser. Other fundraising ideas also discussed.
- Anita gave an update regarding the elevator repairs.

New Business

- Dave and Gordie will work on updating the insurance renewal.
 - VBS is currently on the radar for some time in August.
 - Pastor René gave her report. She shared that a parish digital ministry audit will take place after Easter and before the 2025 parish budget is put together.
 - Our Savior's won't have church Memorial Day weekend. We would like to have parish-wide worship on June 30th at the park in McIntosh.
 - Meeting adjourned by Jane Aakhus and 2nd it by Kristi Skeie.
- Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

News from Immanuel...

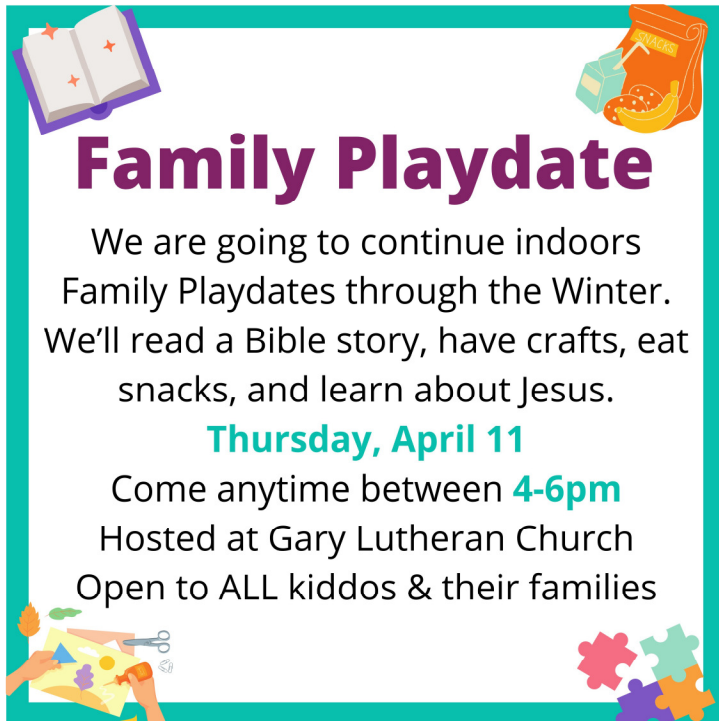
Summary of March 20, 2024, Immanuel Council Meeting

Council members present: Peggy Gunderson, Mary Nell Preisler, Cindy Large, Jon Large, Duane Gunderson, Darrell Lende, Becky Olson, Gloria Steinbrenner, Terry McCollum, Rachel Roggenbuck and Delane Schaumburg. Others present: Katie DeMarais and Pastor René Mehlberg.

- Secretary's and Treasurer's reports were given and approved.
- Worship at Immanuel on Memorial Day weekend, May 26, at 8:30 a.m.
- The parish digital ministry will start back up on Easter Sunday. We need to work as a Parish on funding and sustainability.
- Confirmation service will be held at Immanuel on May 19 at 8:30 a.m.
- No date has been set for Senior Sunday when a quilt will be presented to our graduating Senior.
- Vacation Bible School is being planned at Immanuel during the third week of July, with the date and times to be determined.
- Mother & Daughter Brunch is being planned for Saturday, May 11.
- Immanuel's annual auction will be held Saturday, June 22, at 10 a.m. with a raffle drawing. Raffle tickets for cash prizes (1-\$5,000; 1-\$2,500; 1-\$1,000) will be sold for \$5 per ticket.
- A new copier will be installed the last week In March. Our insurance company will carry coverage on the copier and it was noted that this year our insurance policy now has an increased deductible of \$5,000.

Additional Immanuel Info:

- Ladies' Aid supper on Wednesday, April 17, serving from 4-6:30 p.m. 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.)



Family Playdate

We are going to continue indoors Family Playdates through the Winter. We'll read a Bible story, have crafts, eat snacks, and learn about Jesus.

Thursday, April 11

Come anytime between **4-6pm**

Hosted at Gary Lutheran Church

Open to ALL kiddos & their families



Wednesday Night Worship

Wednesday, April 17
hosted at Immanuel Luth. Church, Bejou

Ladies Aid Supper served from 4:00-6:30pm
Confirmation Class 6:00pm
Lenten Worship at 7pm

YOU are welcome at Wednesday Night Worship:
The Word proclaimed! Music sang! Fellowship shared!



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 23
6:30pm
Peachy's Pub, Bejou



Kids FEEDING Kids

FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY
APRIL
27TH

JOIN US

12:00-2:00 in Grand Forks, ND

For WCYM kids and their families. We have reserved 34 spots that will hope to fill! Please message us if your family is interested in going.

WEM Community Youth Ministry

Ministers:	Members of the Congregations Pastor René Mehlberg (218) 308-7898 <u>pastor.rene.mehlberg@gmail.com</u>
Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM)	Katie DeMarais (218) 820-8287 or <u>demarais.katie@gmail.com</u>
SAM	Rachel Roggenbuck (701) 741-0976 or <u>athomerachel@gmail.com</u>
ANJLP Secretary:	Sue Gunderson (218) 280-8678 or <u>immanuel@gvtel.com</u>
Gary/Ness Sec.:	Julie Gevik (218) 280-3356 or <u>garyrindaloffice@gmail.com</u>
Our Savior's Secretary:	Anita Roy (218) 849-3791 or <u>oursaviors@gvtel.com</u>
Parish Website:	anewjourneyparish.org

APRIL 2024 WORSHIP SCHEDULE (denotes Holy Communion)**

WORSHIP	IMMANUEL	OUR SAVIOR'S	GARY	NESS	SUNDAL
Sunday, April 7 (white)	8:30am–Worship** (PR)	10:30am–Worship** (PR)		8:30 am – Worship** (KD)	
Sunday, April 14 (white) (KD Off)	8:30 am – Worship (RR)	10:30 am – Worship (PR) followed by Council Meeting	8:30 am – Worship (PR) 9:30 am – SS		
Wed., April 17 (white)	4-6:30pm-Supper 6pm-Confirmation 7pm-Worship** followed by Council Meeting				
Sunday, April 21 (white)	8:30am–Worship** (PR)	10:30am–Worship** (PR)	9:30 am – SS 10:30am–Worship** (KD) with Confirmation	8:30 am – Worship (KD)	
SUNDAY, April 28 (white)	8:30 am – Worship (KD)	10:30am–Worship (KD)	8:30am – Worship (PR) 9:30 am – SS		10:30am-Worship** (PR)
SUNDAY, May 5 (white)	8:30 am – Worship**	10:30am–Worship**	8:30 am – Worship** 9:30 am – SS	10:30am–Worship**	