

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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SEPTEMBER 2024



PARISH PRAYER LIST

PRAYER LIST:

Harry Aanden, Jessie Beckman, Shawn Bendickson, Sharon Bronske, Jesse Clark, Becky Dahl, Ron Dahl, Jayden Gensburger, Eric Grieve, Perry Grundyson, Denise Halland, Kurt Halvorson, Diane Hamre, Jesse Hickman, Sherry Jensrud, Gerald Johnson, Rosie Keller, Cindy (Wastweet) Kiester, Ann (Wastweet) Kukowski, Mark Larson, Violet Lee, Donna Lisburg, Julia (Pantaleo) Madoll, Gwen Meyer, Randy Moen, Roger Narum, Keith Olson, Lois Ostenaar, Franklyn Preisler, Susan Ruud, Anita Slater, Charles Svalen, Lily Thronson, Gina Tiokasin, Orv Turner and Tiffany Winter.

CONDOLENCES:

- *Condolences to the friends and family of Harold Olson (Ness) who passed away August 12.*
- *We also want to extend our condolences to the friends and family of Marilyn Natwick (Winger) who passed away August 10.*

CHUCK CRAIN CONCERT/MEAL EVENT

Thank you to everyone that attended our Parish Fundraiser free will offering meal. We raised \$1,428!! For those of you that stayed to enjoy the Chuck Crain concert, we are grateful! Everyone that worked or helped to pull this off, our gratitude!

We are all better together!



PARISH BUDGET COMMITTEE UPDATE: *The ANJLP 2025 Budget Committee's second meeting will be on Wednesday, September 25, at 7pm at Immanuel. Members of the committee are: Dave Stordahl and Mic Evenson (OS), Bonnie Werpy (Gary) and Jill Nelson (Gary and Parish Treasurer) Peggy Gunderson and Duane Gunderson (Immanuel), Mike Sather and Mike Hagy (Ness).*

GARY PLAY DATE THANK-YOUS! *A free community meal was added to the Gary Play Dates May-August. It was a great opportunity for youth, families, and the community to come together. Thank-you to those who helped make those meals possible by donating product, money, or helping with food prep: Ultima Bank-Gary, Gary Fire Department, Phil Ellingsworth, Jean Whitson, Lori Thronson, Bryan Thronson, Buck Engen, and those I missed (sorry!). We'd love to keep this opportunity for food and fellowship going. If interested in helping, contact Pastor René.*

KATIE'S CELEBRATION OPEN HOUSE & SERVICE OF BLESSING:

Wednesday, September 18, will be Katie's open house celebration at Immanuel, officially beginning at 6:00pm. This is the same night as ILC's Ladies Aid Supper (4:00-6:30pm) and worship. This day, time, place was chosen with Katie in conjunction with another event at a time when there isn't other church/parish events happening.

You are invited for supper, time to wish Katie well, and worship starting at 6:45pm, (instead of 7:00pm).

If you are unable to make the celebration and want to wish Katie well, cards can be dropped off at each church (a box will be designated) or mail to the parish (PO Box 308, McIntosh MN 56556) to be delivered to her.

LADIES NIGHT OUT: *Tuesday, September 24, 6:30 p.m. at Peachy's Pub, Bejou. All ladies are welcome for food, fellowship and fun. Bring a friend!*

CONFIRMATION CLASSES: *Pastor René is taking the lead. Continuing and potential new students are being contacted. We are still gathering names and contact information for any youth entering 7th grade or older who have not yet completed the Confirmation program. Email, text, or call Pastor René to get on the list or with any questions.*

SCAM ALERT! BE AWARE!

In mid-August, parish staff experienced someone "impersonating" Pastor René's email, sending messages not from her or her email. If the message seems unusual, check the actual email address is hers (pastor.rene.mehlberg@gmail.com). No message will say, "sent from my mobile device". If you get a suspicious message, do not respond. Text or call her to check on the message.

Again, if you get anything that doesn't sound like the person you know, DO NOT OPEN OR RESPOND TO THE MESSAGE. Check the email address carefully. Delete it immediately. Empty the trash. Contact the person directly but not by replying to the message you received and let them know as they may not know this is happening.

SYNOD ROAD TRIP: *Come meet the NWMN Synod Staff on Tuesday, September 24, at Fisher Lutheran Church, 205 2nd St S in Fisher. Supper at 5:30pm with worship at 6:00pm. Our time together will end with a blessing at 7:30. Join others from the area for a time of fellowship, worship, updates about the Synod, and our work together!*

WOW Opportunity! Join others for the next *Worship Outside the Walls (WOW)* outing to see *Kate Bowler*, who is speaking at the *Avalon Events Center* in Fargo, Thursday October 10, from 7-9pm. *Kate* is an award-winning podcaster, four-time *New York Times* bestselling author, *Duke University* professor, and cancer survivor. She wrote “a blessing for the start of a new school year” also found in this newsletter.

In-person tickets are \$25 (+\$0.63 service fee). Tickets are general admission. Purchase tickets on your own and contact Pastor René or Rachel if interested in carpooling. If you can't make it in person, you can livestream via Zoom. Cost is \$15 (+\$0.35 service fee). For more information or to purchase tickets go to <https://www.humanitiesnd.org/kate>.

******* YOUTH NEWS in the YOUTH CORNER! *******

(This is a separate section to find all the youth news throughout the parish! Yes, some of this info is also elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Confirmation: grades 7-8 (or above if you haven't attended before)

Pastor René is the lead and is connecting with families for orientation, schedule, etc. Contact her with any youth/families to include or with any questions.

Third grade Bibles (or those who haven't received before)

Rachel is the lead. Share names of family/youth to include to get God's word into their hands.

Gary Sunday School: Youth pre-school-6th grade

Starting Sunday, Sept. 15, and each Sunday at 9:30am at Gary Church, unless noted. Teresa Werpy is the contact.

Gary Play Dates:

Looking for volunteers to help lead this once-a-month opportunity or re-envision what can be for the Gary area youth. Play dates have been 4-6pm often on a Thursday. Contact Pastor René if interested.

“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.

Vacation Bible School

We held three opportunities for Vacation Bible School in our Parish this summer. What a blessing to be able to host three opportunities in three different

locations, with varying lengths of time commitments and times of day, in order to reach as many families as possible. All together, we were able to share the message of “Who Is Your Neighbor” with around 45 young people. Crafts, games, songs, Bible stories and more all were used to let kids know that Jesus loves THEM and YOU! Offering was raised to support community needs to do with children. At Immanuel Lutheran, we raised \$68.85 to send to the Jamestown family who lost children in a car cash. At Gary Lutheran, we raised \$110 for the Lily Thronson fundraiser. At Our Savior’s, we raised \$52 to donate to the Win-E-Mac Sole Tree, which purchases school shoes for students.

A huge THANKS goes out to all of our dedicated helpers, teachers, teen leaders, snack makers, staff, and to the adults who made it a priority to bring kiddos to VBS. VBS couldn't happen without you! Keep these and all kiddos in your prayers, that their faith may continue to grow, and that they love and serve the Lord. Please also begin to invite kiddos to Sunday School at Gary Lutheran, which will be starting on Sunday, Sept 15th.

And, if YOU have an idea for an upcoming “Good Gossip” column, let Staff know. We’d love to hear from you so we spread the news of the many ways God’s love is being shared throughout our mission field and beyond!

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR RENÉ L. MEHLBERG...

Dear Beloved Children of God:

*God, show me, show us the world as it really is.
~ Kate Bowler*

The world is a beautiful and terrible place, all at the same time. We do not need to look far or talk to too many people to hear joys and sorrows in their lives or our own.

We remember that it is this broken, but fiercely loved world that God created and came as Jesus to redeem. That somehow, by the incredible grace of God, God continues loving and believing in us to share God’s world of love and goodness here on earth.

Our world here is on the cusp of a new school year. Sports practices have begun. Teacher in-services started. Back-to-school nights attended. Perhaps by the time you read this, a few days of school are in the books.

A new school year is a change of rhythm for us all. It’s also a great opportunity to support youth and families out and about in the community: football games, volleyball matches, concerts, or other activities. Let me and your church family

know how we can share God's love and promises where you are! I love getting out, joining others to see what's happening.

As the focus is often on students, parents/guardians, teachers this time of year, don't forget all the others who make the school year a success: cooks, janitors, bus drivers, paras, secretaries, social workers, administrators, and anyone else I missed, as there are many! Think about them all as you read the blessing below.

A Blessing for the Start of a New School Year

The year is tilting toward the start of school again,
but truth be told, we're not ready.

We're still hanging on to summer, to the promise it held
for long-awaited connections and celebrations,
for refreshment for our bodies and souls
in water and sky and color and sunlight,
and all those little moments given to us
where we could linger just a little longer.

Now that it's almost over, we don't want to let it go.
The beauty. The freedom. All that was life-giving.

God, could you help us stretch it, extend it,
and maybe even blend it into this coming school year?

Parents, students, teachers, all,
May your newly-structured days breathe with creativity,
your new duties be infused with delight.

As you write on those fresh new calendars,
May you trust that your plans are a lot like magic ink.
Much may seem to disappear into obscurity,
but whatever is done in love will remain.

~by Kate Bowler

As always, blessings and prayers for you and your families!
Pastor René

A MESSAGE FROM RACHEL ROGGENBUCK, SAM...

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I heard this song on the radio recently and the chorus really hit me.

“Take me back
To the place that feels like home
To the people I can depend on
To the faith that's in my bones
Take me back
To a preacher and a verse
Where they've seen me at my worst
To the love I had at first
Oh, I want to go to church”

[Church (Take Me Back) by Chocren & Co]

This is so true for so many of us. Our churches are our homes. The places where we are a family, a community, a community of believers. A family that doesn't always get along, but always has the same mission.

During the VBS sessions in July and August, the kids learned “Who Is Our Neighbor?” reminding them that we are ALL neighbors and if someone needs help, we should help. I am hoping that stuck with them and that they share it with other kids they meet and even grown-ups.

Our church family and community recently supported the parish fundraiser meal. The energy and people! I don't even have words to describe it!! The fundraiser totaled \$1428!!! Way to go! This was just one place that we had an opportunity to work together. There will be more! But let's not wait for the next parish opportunity to love our neighbor! There are opportunities every single day. Let us do what Jesus commanded in Luke 10:37. And he said, “He who showed mercy on him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Your sister in Christ,
Rachel Roggenbuck, SAM

Minutes - A New Journey Parish Council Meeting

(6:30 p.m. on August 12, 2024, at Immanuel Lutheran, Bejou, MN)

Council members present: Mary Nell Preisler, Becky Olson (for Jimmy Steinmetz), Kristi Skeie, Tanya Hamre, Teresa Werpy, Karen Carlsrud, and Jill Nelson. (Others attending:

Bonnie Werpy, Sue Gunderson, Katie DeMarais, Rachel Roggenbuck, and Pastor René. Duane Gunderson was present to report on the 2025 Budget Committee).

Teresa called the meeting to order and Pastor René led devotions.

Secretary's Report: Minutes of the July 15, 2024, meeting were distributed. A motion was made by Becky, seconded by Kristi, and carried to approve the minutes as presented.

Treasurer's Report: Following Jill's distribution and review of the current financial reports, a motion was made by Mary, seconded by Tanya, and carried to approve the financial reports as presented.

Old Business:

- Duane Gunderson reported on the July 25 meeting of the Parish Budget Committee where two members of each congregation who best knew the congregations' financials met. They reviewed their financial statuses, brainstormed, and discussed ideas for the 2025 Budget and possibilities that could be implemented to continue beyond the three-year commitment. It was noted that there is information, such as 2025 staff compensation, needed by the Budget Committee prior to their next September meeting.
- The Chuck Crain concert and meal event was discussed, including meal plans, setup, and cleanup.

New Business:

- With Katie leaving the end of August, the following items were reviewed:
 - An update of ministry coverage for the remaining year. December 24 services will be 4pm at Our Savior's and 8pm at Gary. December 25 services will be at Immanuel and Ness with times yet to be finalized.
 - Pastor René will lead Confirmation and is working on contacting students and setting up a schedule.
 - An addendum to Rachel's SAM agreement was reviewed, which included adding 12 hours to her previous 13 hours per week.
 - Items yet to be addressed are: Youth Group, VBS, Family Playdates, Bible Camp, Third Grade Bibles, First Communion, and Senior Quilts
 - Parish Council requested a list of Katie's job duties and who is taking over those duties.

Staff Reports:

Katie covered the following:

- VBS update

Rachel covered the following:

- She has been working with Pastor René to discuss ongoing duties.
- She also has been handling some visitations and working on the Chuck Crain concert/meal event.

- Bridget Roggenbuck is done helping with taping as of the end of August. Mike Roggenbuck (Rachel's husband) is taking over Bridget's duties and is donating his time. We will send Bridget a note thanking her for her service.

Pastor René covered the following:

- Continuing to hold onto the taping ministry survey results for further discussion.
- Shared work done in the last month in the key areas of Administration, Building a Sense of Community, Preaching/Worship (including leading worship/Bible Studies at area nursing homes), Youth & Families, and Caring Ministry.

No decision has yet been made on a date for Katie's "send-off" event.

A motion was made by Becky, seconded by Kristi, and carried, to set the ANJLP Council Meetings for the second Monday each month, at Immanuel at 6:30 p.m.

The next ANJLP Council meeting will be held Monday, September 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel. A motion was made by Becky, seconded by Mary, and carried, to adjourn.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

News from Our Savior's...

August 11 Council Meeting Highlights

- June minutes approved
- Financial Report as of end of July: net loss was \$5,423.89 with total year loss of \$26,611.68. Dave, Jane and Anita are set up as Thrivent account signers. Parsonage sale funds will be put in Thrivent for use in general fund.
- The parsonage committee will put the parsonage up for sale after September 1 for \$220,000, with advertising on Zillow and social media sites.
- Gordie will help Bruce Haaven measure and stake out more cemetery plots.
- Plans are to purchase 100 Hugo's fundraiser books for \$2 each and sell them for \$10 each.
- VBS will be held August 14.
- There will be no worship services on September 1 due to Labor Day weekend.
- Fall Meatball Dinner will be held September 22 following worship.
- Rachel gave an update on the Chuck Crain concert/meal and indicated Our Savior's is to bring desserts for the meal.
- We took in \$389 at the Parish worship service held June 30 at the Park. Backpacks were ordered and the remaining funds were given to the Sole Tree Shoe Program for kids at the Win-E-Mac School.
- With Katie leaving August 31, Rachel will increase her weekly hours through December 2024.
- Next council meeting will be held September 8 following worship.

News from Gary Lutheran...

NOTE: Sunday School starts on September 15 at 9:30am.

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.):
 - Sept. 1: No Worship Service
 - Sept. 8 (8:30am) & Sept. 15 (10:30am): Ben & Tammy Ramstorf
 - Sept. 22 (10:30am) & Sept. 29 (9am joint worship but no communion): Bryan & Amanda Thronson, Gatlyn & Sara Affield
- Gary Lutheran Altar Guild for September: Jill Nelson

News from Immanuel...

Summary of August 21, 2024, Immanuel Council Meeting

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

- Secretary's report was given and approved.
- Treasurer's report was given and approved. It was noted that our church insurance has gone up substantially so Duane will check on prices with other companies.

Staff report:

- Katie thanked everyone for support and prayers.
- A "send-off" celebration for Katie was set for September 18.
- With Katie leaving the end of August, Pastor René and Rachel are working on revised responsibilities.
- Reminder: Chuck Crain concert and parish meal fundraiser at Immanuel on Wednesday, August 22
- Worship coverage schedule for the remainder of the year was shared with the Council.
- Discussion regarding all church councils and parish council getting together quarterly.

New Business:

- Duane reported on the Parish budget committee meeting and discussion followed.

Additional Immanuel Info:

Ladies' Aid supper with free will offering will be held at Immanuel from 4-6:30pm (followed by 6:45pm worship and 8pm council meeting) on Wednesday, September 18. Servers are Andrea Bendickson, Jean Uhlir and Erica Holmvik. NOTE: Katie's open house celebration will start at 6pm.



**Wednesday
Night Worship**
hosted at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bejou

Wednesday, September 18
Ladies Aid Supper served from 4:00-6:30pm
Farewell for Katie: 6 - 6:45pm
Worship at 6:45pm

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



KATE BOWLER

**Worship Outside the
Walls Parish Outing**

Thurs, Oct 10. 7pm
Avalon Event Center, Fargo

**CONTACT PR. RENE OR
RACHEL FOR MORE INFO**

Tickets are \$25, and can be ordered
online: www.humanitiesnd.org
We will ride share as needed.

Area Activities:

- Saturday, September 21: McIntosh Fall Festival
- “Finding Faith in the Field”--First Lutheran Church, Mahnomon , Wednesday, October 2, at 7pm. Hear story of Ben Hylden, Park River, ND, who survived a terrible car accident at age 16 and given a 5% chance of living. He surpassed doctors' expectations and began a remarkable journey of faith, and endured many hardships in life which taught him what truly matters the most.

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

SEPTEMBER 2024 WORSHIP SCHEDULE (denotes Holy Communion)**

WORSHIP	IMMANUEL	OUR SAVIOR'S	GARY	NESS	SUNDAL
Sunday, Sept. 1 (green) NO WORSHIP DUE TO LABOR DAY WEEKEND					
Sunday, Sept. 8 (green)	8:30am–Worship (RR)	10:30am–Worship (RR) followed by Council Meeting	8:30am—Worship (PR) followed by Council Meeting	10:30am – Worship** (PR)	
Sunday, Sept. 15 (green)	8:30am–Worship** (RR)	10:30am–Worship** (RR)	9:30am-Sunday School 10:30am-Worship ** (PR)		9:00am-Worship** (PR)
Wed., Sept. 18 (green)	4-6:30pm-Supper 6pm-Katie Open House & Blessing 6:45pm-Worship** followed by Council Meeting				
Sunday, Sept. 22 (green)	8:30 am – Worship (PR)	10:30am–Worship (PR) followed by Harvest Dinner	9:30am-Sunday School 10:30 am – Worship (RR)	8:30am-Worship (RR)	
Sunday, Sept. 29 (green)			9:00am-Joint Worship (PR) followed by Meal		

NOTE:

- ***THERE WILL BE NO WORSHIP SERVICES ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, DUE TO LABOR DAY WEEKEND.***
- ***ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 29, THERE WILL BE A JOINT WORSHIP AT GARY LUTHERAN FOLLOWED BY A MEAL.***