

**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

Non-Profit  
US Postage  
Paid  
Fertile, MN  
Permit 27

**Address Service Requested**

**NOVEMBER 2024**



***PRAYER LIST: Jessie Beckman, Shawn Bendickson, Melinda Bolen, Becky Dahl, Ron Dahl, Jayden Gensburger, Eric Grieve, Denise Halland, Kurt Halvorson, Diane Hamre, Jesse Hickman, Sherry Jensrud, Gerald Johnson, Rosie Keller, Jesse Koch, Mark Larson, Violet Lee, Donna Lisburg, Julia (Pantaleo) Madoll, Gwen Meyer, Roger Narum, Keith Olson, Lois Ostenaar, Franklyn Preisler, Susan Ruud, Anita Slater, Lily Thronson, Gina Tiokasin, Orv Turner, Jerry Winkler and Tiffany Winter.***

***Condolences to the family and friends of Vernon Nelson (Sundal) who passed away October 4; and to the family and friends of Gary Stueness (Gary) who passed away October 6.***

***NEWSLETTER NOTICE: The next newsletter distributed the end of November will be a joint newsletter covering December and January, so if you have any announcements you want included, please be sure to let us know this month.***

***ADDITIONAL PARISH NEWS:***

***WE ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW PARISH TREASURER!*** Jill Nelson, current ANJLP treasurer, will be ending her time in that position as of December 31. We give thanks and praise for her work and dedication, using her God given gifts and skills before, during, and after ANJLP was formed.

The parish is looking for someone to fill in this most important role and would love to identify someone before year end to assist with the transition. If you or someone you know may be interested, contact Jill or Jimmy Steinmetz (parish president) to find out more.

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

***Confirmation: grades 7-8 (or above if you haven't attended before)***  
***Classes continue the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays from 6-8pm at Immanuel. The third Wednesday includes worship starting at 7pm. Invitation still open for any student to participate, who hasn't yet. Contact Pastor René.***

***Gary Sunday School: Each Sunday at 9:30am at Gary Church, unless noted. Youth pre-school-6<sup>th</sup> grade. Teresa Werpy is the contact.***

*NWMN Synod Middle School Youth Gathering: Fri-Sat., Nov 22-23 OR Sat-Sun., Nov 23-24*

*Last call! Middle school youth in grades 6-8 from throughout the synod gather for an overnight at Luther Crest in Alexandria, choosing which dates work best. Open for youth and their friends. Depending on interest and dates available, parent/guardian transportation/chaperoning may be needed because of staffing changes. More information to come! Contact Pastor René if interested.*

*WEM Community Youth Ministry:* *This group sponsored a Citywide Worship Night on Wednesday, October 16, providing an AMAZING opportunity for youth and adults to worship with incredible music. A few from ANJLP attended.*

*Win-e-Mac (WEM) youth in grades 7-12 are encouraged and invited to participate in any upcoming WEM Community Youth Ministry Events. Events for the rest of 2024 yet to be planned. Follow them on Facebook for more information or ask Pastor René.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***“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.*

Sometimes the ministry is going out and supporting the youth and families where they are!

### **Youth Athletics & Activities**

School is in full swing, including various sports and other activities that students participate in. As I (Pastor René) write this, I know that for some younger athletes (junior high, C-team), their seasons have ended. For others, playoffs are about to begin. We’ll see who is still playing by the time you read this.

I also know that other students are preparing for Fall Musicals, band concerts, and a host of other activities. I attended many student events and know I’ve missed some. Because our parish has students in at least 4 school districts, it’s difficult to attend everything. It’s also helpful for you (parents, grands, youth) to reach out and let me know what’s happening! I would love to join you at the game, concert, performance– whatever it may be.

For the young people participating: Do your best in all you do. That’s all you can do. Continue to work hard to improve and learn. At some point you may decide, I don’t want to do this anymore. That’s okay. Support one another, especially when things are tough. On the days when it seems as if your best is not good enough, know that

you are still loved, loved, loved. Share God's love and live into the lessons Jesus taught wherever you find yourself.

For the adults supporting young people: As I said above, we also can share God's love and live into Jesus' lessons where we find ourselves, by supporting and encouraging **all** students. Being a good sport ourselves. Realizing the students are doing their best, as well as coaches, refs, advisors, all.

I recently had a young person ask me, "Why do you come to our games?" My response was, "I want to support you and others in what you do." The majority of Jesus' ministry and living out a life of faith was out and about "in the wild", meaning not in a church. May we go forth and share God's love and promises wherever we find ourselves.

Continued prayers and blessings for all our students in all their activities yet to come!

\*\*\*\*\*

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

Dear Beloved Children of God:

Our last WOW (Worship Outside the Walls) activity was a trip to Fargo to hear Kate Bowler speak. A total of 6 people from ANJLP made the trip, including me!

I am a huge Kate Bowler fan. This Duke Divinity professor not only teaches, but speaks, writes (I often use her blessings), and interviews a wide variety of fascinating people on her podcast, "Everything Happens." One of which was Gary Haugen, founder and CEO of International Justice Mission, whose mission is to protect people in poverty from violence by rescuing victims, bringing criminals to justice, restoring survivors to safety and strength, and helping local law enforcement build a safe future that lasts. That is really heavy work, and this is the saying guiding him and his staff: "Joy is the oxygen for doing hard things in the world."

That phrase has been sticking with me as I have the privilege of knowing and walking with people experiencing challenging times, doing hard things, making difficult decisions, perhaps not sure what the future holds. For Gary and us all, it's a reminder that we need a regular discipline for finding joy in our lives. That it's those moments (or more) that help carry us through the hard things.

It led me to Psalm 30, where we hear from our holy scriptures and faithful ancestors similar themes:

*Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.*

*You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.*

A reminder that our trust is in the Lord, who is with us in the hard things and in our joy.

We are a community to be with people in the hard things, and how do we provide joy to help us and others when faced with the hard things in this world? As I asked parish council, I'm now asking you to consider:

- What brings you joy?
- What brings you joy in your church/with this parish?

I would love to hear your answers! Reach out and let me know!

As always, prayers and blessings for you all!

Pastor René

\*\*\*\*\*

### ***A MESSAGE FROM RACHEL ROGGENBUCK, SAM...***

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Recently, I attended a class titled “Worship” as part of my Synodically Authorized Minister education. It was filled with wonderful information and I am excited to implement some of what I learned, as well as continuing to learn more.

As part of the class, we had to write an essay answering the following question: If a non-Christian friend asked you why do y'all get together on Sunday morning for worship, what 2-3 main things would you tell them? Here is what I submitted and I am also curious what your answer would be. Please share your answer with me sometime.

What new insights would I share? I love getting together on Sunday mornings for worship to be in the community of believers who love and support me, and have invited me to do the same for them. When we share in the elements of worship--hearing the Word, communion, blessing, prayers, and song--we are sharing in the love of Christ together, making us into a family of God. Another reason I love to get together on Sunday mornings to worship is to raise our voices in song. Whether parishioners have a voice for singing or not, there is something so beautiful about singing the same words together, hearing the word of God in yet another way. When a member of the community who regularly attends worship is missing, it is felt by everyone, they are missed and they are loved.

What new insights would I share? Worship is also a time to sit in the silence, and marvel at the sounds, and feelings that are in the place of worship. It is a time to pray and center yourself and to feel God's presence. As leaders of worship, we are teaching and sharing the gospel--God's action through the text. When we can do that and tie it back to people's own experiences, that's when the text makes sense and it is easier to share the word of God with others as we live our lives.

YOU are an important part of our worshipping family. Whether you are with us in person, online or in prayer, your membership matters and I am thankful for you! “See” you in worship!

Your Sister in Christ,  
Rachel Roggenbuck, SAM

\*\*\*\*\*

***Minutes - A New Journey Parish Council Meeting***  
(6:30 p.m. on October 14, 2024, at Immanuel Lutheran, Bejou, MN)

Council members present: Mary Preisler, Jimmy Steinmetz, Teresa Werpy, Karen Carlsrud, Jane Aakhus, Wanda Stordahl and Jill Nelson. Others attending: Pastor René Mehlberg, Rachel Roggenbuck and Bonnie Werpy.

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

Secretary’s report: Minutes of the September 9, 2024, meeting were distributed. A motion was made by Mary, seconded by Jane and carried, to approve the minutes as printed.

Treasurer’s report: Jill distributed the current financial report as of today (report says thru December 2024). Three council members needed to register with the State of MN—Jim, Karen and Jill. Wanda moved to accept, seconded by Teresa and approved as presented.

Old Business:

Report from September 29 parish worship: Gary and Ness hosted it. Soup and sandwiches with free will donation. 35-40 in attendance.

Report from parish budget committee meeting on September 25: The Budget committee was unanimous in being content that if the parish council will forgive the upfront \$5,000 contribution of each congregation in 2025 and refit the budget to reduce the overage in the parish account, all were agreed for 2025 Budget. There will be some carryover from 2024. Jill has copies of the reports she shared at this committee meeting. Council is to go through the budget knowing there is a buffer. We have not been utilizing all of the money that is in the budget. Jill projected a \$50,000+ excess at the end of the year.

New Business:

Report from each church: What’s Coming up? What has gone well? How can we support and pray for one another?

- Ness: Moving services to the basement.
- Gary: Fall dinner November 24, Raffle ticket fundraiser.

- Immanuel: Fall Festival was a huge success, netting \$4700. The Lutefisk/Meatball Supper will be held on Saturday, December 7.
- Our Savior's: Premiere of the movie Alien filmed in McIntosh at the Fosston Theater 4pm, Saturday October 19. Fall Festival and craft/bake sale in mid-September- both went very well. Possibly Thanksgiving eve Service. Fundraiser at Our Savior's is a Hugo's coupon book \$10 each. Working on the sale of the parsonage.

#### Working Through the 2025 Parish Budget Draft:

Questions about continuing to serve Sundal: Pastor René will be following up with them and have discussion/written agreement. Some talk about Katie serving them instead of someone from the parish. Jill feels that this council needs to make the decision on whether or not to continue to serve them. Jane made a motion to discontinue a relationship with Sundal in 2025, seconded by Mary. Motion passed.

Reviewed synod guidelines for pastoral and SAM packages.

Remove Pulpit Supply from the budget. Staff will talk with each church to find lay leaders if they want a service.

Teresa made a motion to accept the proposed budget, Mary seconded, motion approved. Final proposed budget number is \$165,867.15. Parish reps will take this to their councils for their approval and return their opinions by the November Parish council meeting.

#### Staff Report:

Rachel: Since we were last together, attended Fall Theological in Warroad where we stretched our minds and hearts in ministry, took a vacation which was wonderful, attended a 12-hour Worship class via Zoom, Ladies' Night Out is at Gary Cafe on October 22. Please have orders to Rachel by October 18. Third grade Bible will be presented to Lauren McCollum at Immanuel on October 27.

Pastor René: Living into our new staffing model. Let us know if it is not working. The vastness of our parish is more noticeable this year. Multiple events throughout the parish on the same nights. Three students this year in confirmation. Connecting with families about attending Synod middle school youth gathering. Shared work done with pastoral care and being out and about throughout the communities. Highlighted items distributed from the NWMN Synod Road Trip.

#### Other Business: None

Next meeting will be November 18 at 6:30pm at Immanuel. Wanda motioned to adjourn, Jane seconded. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Rachel Roggenbuck

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

### **October 13, 2024, Our Savior's Council Meeting Highlights**

- Dave gave an update on the Parish Budget Committee.
- Parsonage update was given by the Parsonage Committee.
- Kristi gave update on Thanksgiving Eve Service.
- Discussed cemetery plots & surveying future plots.
- A Ness Café gift card will be given to John B. for his help with the squirrels.
- Fundraising ideas were discussed.
- Pastor René gave her report.
- Worship service will be in the basement on October 27.
- Wanda and Jane will attend the parish council meeting on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Additional Our Savior's Information**

- On October 20, we officially welcomed Scottie Lou Drellack into the family of God through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. May we be a loving support in her lifelong journey in faith!  
Parents: Jenna & Nick Drellack  
Sponsors: Mikayla & Zach Larsen
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church is selling Hugo's Supermarket coupon books as a fundraiser. The coupon book cost is \$10.00 each and can be used at any of the Hugo's stores. If you are interested in purchasing a book please contact our church office secretary, Anita Roy. 218-563-3495 or 218-849-3791. Thank you.

\*\*\*\*\*

## *News from Gary Lutheran...*

### **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.):
  - Nov. 3 (8:30am) & 10 (8:30am): Mike & Jill Nelson (No Communion Nov. 10)
  - Nov. 17 (10:30am) & 24 (10:30am): Nathan & Bridget Sather (No Communion Nov. 24)
- Gary Lutheran Altar Guild for November: Terri Sirjord and Shirley Moe

### **Additional Gary News**

*Harvest Lunch:* Sunday, November 24, from 11:30am-1:00pm

Come for food and fellowship for this Turkey Meal with the fixings at Gary Lutheran. Free will donation.

*Got Your Raffle Tickets?* Gary Lutheran is sponsoring a raffle fundraiser, selling 200 tickets for \$100 each. Cash prizes of \$4000, \$2000, and \$1000 (4 of these). Did you buy 1 (or more) chances to win or have you helped sell? Funds raised will help with the general fund of ministry and mission. Questions? Contact Lori Thronson.



## *News from Immanuel...*

### **October 16, 2024, Immanuel Council Meeting Highlights**

Council members present: Jimmy Steinmetz, Duane Gunderson, Cindy Large, Jon Large, Mary Preisler, Gloria Steinbrenner, Terry McCollum, Rachel Roggenbuck, Darrel Lende and Peggy Gunderson.

- Treasurer's report was given and approved.

Staff report:

- Pastor René has three confirmation students, and asked that we keep her informed of any school/community events she could attend.
- One third grade student will receive a Bible during worship at Immanuel on October 27.
- Rachel is adjusting to her increased work hours.

Old Business:

- The December 7 lutefisk/meatball dinner was discussed, including donations of potatoes and hamburger.
- A street light was installed at the east entrance to the Church parking lot.

New Business:

- The proposed 2025 parish budget was reviewed and approved by the Immanuel Council.

### **Additional Immanuel Info:**

- Luran McCollum, daughter of Adam and Carolyn McCollum, received her 3rd grade Bible at Immanuel on October 27. We celebrate with her as she learns the history of the church and immerses herself in the Word of God. Jesus loves you.
- Ladies' Aid supper with free will offering will be held at Immanuel from 4-6:30pm (with 6:00pm Confirmation, 7:00pm worship and 8pm council meeting) on Wednesday, November 20. Servers are Joyce Demere, Sheryl Dahl and Kari Ann Keller.
- **Quilters:** Watch for additional information about a regular schedule for quilting at Immanuel starting this month. Call Sue Gunderson at 218-280-8678 with any questions.

# Wednesday Night Worship

hosted at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bejou

Wednesday, November 20  
Ladies Aid Supper served from 4:00-6:30pm  
Confirmation 6:00pm  
Worship at 7:00pm  
ILC Council Mtg 8:00pm

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, November 26 ~ 6:30pm**  
**Erickson's Smokehouse**  
**Fertile**

# Harvest Lunch

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24

11:30AM - 1:00PM

GARY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Free Will Donation

Raffle Drawing during Dinner

Gary Lutheran Church: 205 Thorpe St. Gary, MN

### Menu:

- Turkey Gravy
- Mashed Potatoes
- Stuffing
- Veggies
- Cranberries
- Desserts

### Area Activities:

- Friday, November 29: McIntosh Black Friday
- Saturday, November 30: McIntosh Small Business Saturday
- Saturday, December 7: Santa Claus Day in Gary
- Saturday, December 7: A Very Merry McIntosh (evening)



SUNDAY  
NOV 3RD  
11am - 1pm

**BENEFIT MEAL & RAFFLE FOR**  
**Jesse Koch**

Gary American Legion in Gary, MN  
Hamburger Gravy Meal (GF Available)  
Raffle with Multiple Large Prizes (\$500+ Values)

*A benefit supporting Jesse Koch and his family will be held Sunday, November 3rd, at the American Legion in Gary. Jesse, a 26-year-old father of two young boys, was recently diagnosed with Diffuse Large B Cell Lymphoma and is currently undergoing an 18-week chemotherapy regimen. This benefit will help raise funds to cover medical expenses and support the Koch family during this challenging time.*

*Jesse grew up in Gary, MN, and graduated from Norman County East High School in 2016. He currently works at Lee Bros Sales in Ada, MN.*

*The event from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM includes a free-will donation meal and raffles with exciting prizes, games including some for kids. All proceeds will go to Jesse's family.*

*If you're unable to attend but still want to help, donations are welcome at Ultima Bank in Gary, MN.*

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

**NOVEMBER 2024 WORSHIP SCHEDULE (\*\* denotes Holy Communion)**

| <b>WORSHIP</b>   | <b>IMMANUEL</b>  | <b>OUR SAVIOR'S</b>                                    | <b>GARY</b>  | <b>NESS</b>                 | <b>SUNDAL</b>            |
|--|--|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>All Saints Sunday,<br/>Nov. 3</b> (white)                   | 8:30am-Worship**<br>(RR)   | 10:30am-Worship**<br>(RR)                              | 8:30am—Worship<br>(PR)<br>9:30am-Sunday<br>School                                    | 10:30am –<br>Worship** (PR) |                          |
| <b>Sunday, Nov. 10</b><br>(green)                              | 8:30am–Worship (RR)  | 10:30am–Worship<br>(PR) followed by<br>Council Meeting | 8:30am—Worship<br>(PR)<br>9:30am-Sunday<br>School                                    |                             |                          |
| <b>Sunday, Nov. 17</b><br>(green)                              | 8:30 am – Worship**<br>(RR)  | 10:30am–Worship**<br>(RR)                              | 9:30am-Sunday<br>School<br>10:30am-Worship **<br>(PR) followed by<br>Council Meeting |                             | 9:00am-Worship**<br>(PR) |
| <b>Wed., Nov. 20</b><br>(green)                                | 4-6:30pm-Supper<br>6pm-Confirmation<br>7pm-Worship**<br>followed by Council<br>Meeting |  |  |                             |                          |
| <b>Christ the King<br/>Sunday, Nov. 24</b><br>(white)          | 8:30am–Worship (PR)  | 10:30am–Worship<br>(PR)                                | 9:30am-Sunday<br>School<br>10:30 am – Worship<br>(RR) followed by<br>Turkey Dinner   | 8:30am-Worship<br>(RR)      |                          |
| <b>Wed., Nov. 27</b><br>(green)                                |  | 7pm-Community<br>Thanksgiving Eve<br>Worship           |  |                             |                          |
| <b>Sunday, Dec. 1<br/>First Sunday of<br/>Advent</b><br>(blue) | 8:30 am – Worship**<br>(RR)  | 10:30am–Worship**<br>(PR)                              | 8:30am—Worship**<br>(PR)<br>9:30am-Sunday<br>School                                  |                             |                          |