

MARCH 2023

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
*Connecting people with God and with other people
to make a difference!*
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Immanuel Newsletter GOD'S WORK – OUR HANDS

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Congregation Meeting

Sunday, March 5

The Annual Congregation Meeting
will be held after the
10:30 AM Combined Worship Service.

CONNECTING WITH GOD

FROM Pastor Hahn:

My dear Immanuel church family,

Have you heard this explanation of the meaning of Holy Communion? “Holy Communion is NOT a reward for clean living but holy medicine for broken people!”

“Christianity is a religion where sinners have all the advantages.”
– B. Brown Taylor

This explanation

is generally attributed to a woman who has been named one of the ten best preachers in the U.S.A.: The Reverend Barbara Brown Taylor. However, I wanted to be sure that this explanation really came from her. So, I started perusing some of her writings that seemed related.

First, I read a piece with the title, “Gospel Medicine” in which she explores two verses from the Gospel of Luke where Jesus says, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.*

I did not find what I was looking for but I found this awesome insight: “There are a million ways to proclaim the good news [what she calls ‘gospel medicine’] ... but nine times out of ten ... it will be the quiet kind: reading a psalm to a sick friend, telling the truth to someone who has asked for it, ending a quarrel with words of forgiveness, writing a note that restores hope, listening to an old woman’s story, laughing at a young boy’s joke, inviting a stranger to come in.

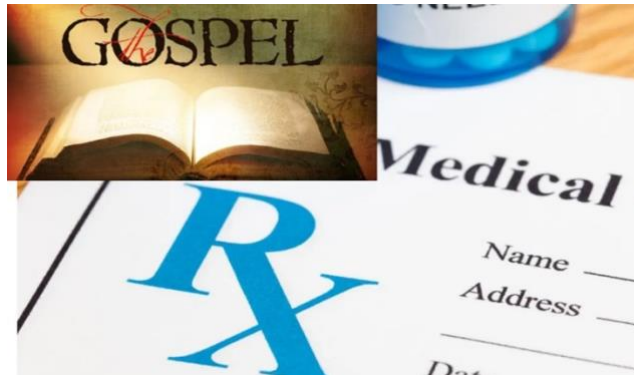
The wonderful thing about gospel medicine is that it works right away; it is no sooner said than done, because the good news *effects* what it *proclaims*.”

The second resource I consulted, hoping to find the above explanation of Holy Communion was entitled “Arthritis of the Spirit” I consider it one of Barbara Brown Taylor’s best pieces. It is very illuminating and very inspiring. It unpacks the statement of Jesus to Peter that he should forgive someone who had sinned against him NOT seven times, BUT seventy-seven times. (See Matthew 18:21+22.)

Brown Taylor makes several excellent points and shares some awesome

stories in this piece, but it is too much to repeat here. But one brief line of thought warrants to be quoted:

“Christianity is a religion in which the sinners have all the advantages. They can step on your feet 55 times and you are supposed to keep smiling. They can talk bad about you every time you leave the room and it is your job to excuse them with no thought of getting even. The burden is on you, because you have been forgiven yourself, and God expects you to do unto others as God has done for you.”



So, what are we to do? Brown Taylor suggests this: “Staying angry with you is how I protect myself from you. Refusing to forgive you is not only how I

punish you; it is also how I keep you from getting close enough to hurt me again; and nine times out of ten it works, only there is a serious side effect. It is called bitterness, and it can do terrible things to the human body and soul.”

May God bless you with spiritual wisdom, stamina, and growth as you continue your Lenten journey.
–Pastor Hahn

P.S.: I never did find the source of the quote.

„Den Toten die Würde wiedergeben“

Der Leitende Bischof der VELKD, Ralf Meister, besucht das Vernichtungslager Auschwitz-Birkenau.

„In der Erinnerung geben wir den Toten die Würde wieder, die ihnen unsere Vorväter und -mütter genommen haben“, sagte Ralf Meister, Leitender Bischof der Vereinigten Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche in Deutschland (VELKD), bei seinem Besuch der Konzentrationslager in Auschwitz.

Im Rahmen eines Vorbereitungstreffens für die Vollversammlung des Lutherischen Weltbundes (LWB) in Krakau im September 2023 nahmen sich die etwa 80 Delegierten und Gäste Zeit, den wohl schrecklichsten Tatort der NS-Verbrechen zu besichtigen, an dem 1,1 Millionen Menschen, die allermeisten davon Jüdinnen und Juden, ermordet wurden.

Zusammen mit dem Landesbischof der Evangelischen Kirche in Mitteldeutschland, Friedrich Kramer, hielt Bischof Meister eine kurze Andacht an dem internationalen Denkmal auf dem Gelände des Vernichtungslagers Birkenau (KZ Auschwitz II).

„Das wirklich Irrationale und tatsächlich Unerklärbare“,



Todestor + Sektor BII, ehm. KZ Auschwitz 1

zitierte Meister angesichts der bis ins kleinste Detail durchgeplanten Tötungsmaschinerie den Schriftsteller und KZ-Überlebenden Imre Kertész, „ist nicht das Böse. Im Gegenteil, es ist das Gute.“

Auschwitz bleibe uns „anvertraut“, wie es Siegfried Lenz schon sagte. Mit dieser Erinnerung Frieden schließen zu wollen, „sei eine Illusion – denn die Heimsuchungen nehmen kein Ende.“

Zuvor hatte die stellvertretende Vorsitzende der VELKD-Bischöflichen Konferenz, Kristina Kühnbaum-Schmidt, zusammen mit dem Bischof der Evangelisch-Augsburgischen Kirche in

Polen (EAKP), Jerzy Samiec, an der „Schwarzen Wand“ des Stammlagers Auschwitz einen Kranz niedergelegt. Die mit schwarzen Isolierplatten belegte Wand zwischen Block 10 und 11 war der Exekutionsort für die Todesstrafen, die Scheingerichte im KZ fällten.

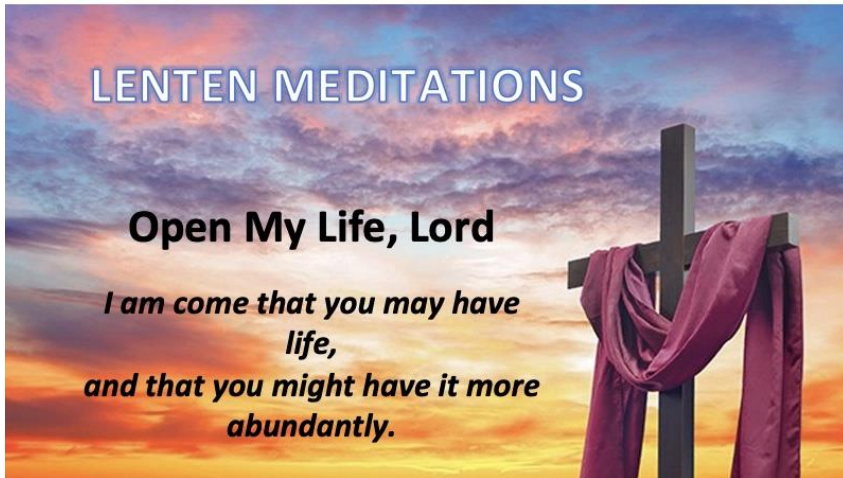
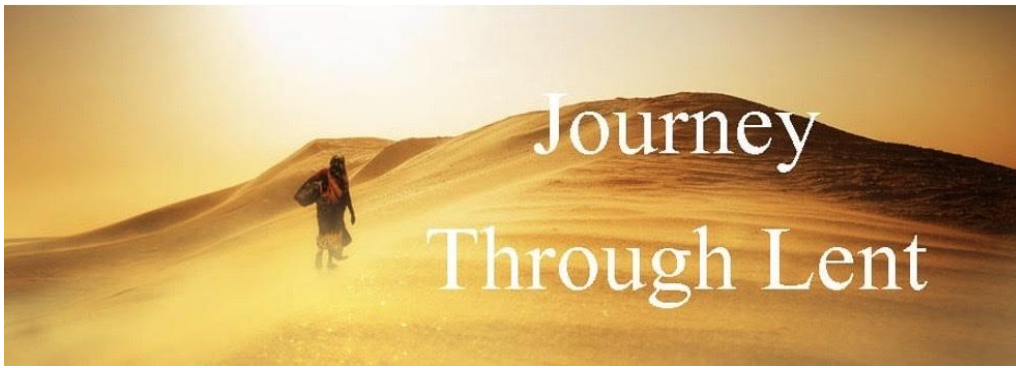


Das Internationale Denkmal, ehemaliges KZ Auschwitz-Birkenau

Das Vorbereitungstreffen wurde organisiert vom Deutschen Nationalkomitee des LWB in Zusammenarbeit mit der EAKP. Auf der Tagesordnung stand auch die Beratung über ein Dokument zum christlich-jüdischen Verhältnis. Die nächste LWB-Vollversammlung findet vom 13. bis 19. September 2023 in Krakau statt. Es wird mit rund 350 Teilnehmenden aus lutherischen Kirchen weltweit gerechnet.

Von der Pressestelle der VELKD, Hannover. Dr. Frank Hofmann.

Please contact Pastor Hahn for an English version of this article.



Lenten Worship

Tuesdays
7:30 PM German Meditation
(Online or Telephone)

Wednesdays
10:00 AM Bible Study
(Conference Room, Online or Telephone)

11:11 AM English Meditation
(Nave, Online or Telephone)
Followed by light lunch

7:00 PM English Meditation
(Online or Telephone)

7

WOCHEN
OHNE
VERZAGHEIT

Die Wochenthemen

28.2.: Licht an (Gen. 1,15)
7.3.: Meine Ängste (1 Sam 17,4-11)
14.3.: Was mich trägt (Numeri 6,24-26)
21.3.: Und wie ich strahle! (Mt 5,14-16)
28.3.: Wir gehen gemeinsam (Rut 1,16-17)
4.4.: Durch die Nacht (Mt 27,45-46)

In dunklen Zeiten braucht es Licht, um den Mut nicht zu verlieren. Die Fastenaktion „7 Wochen Ohne“ der evangelischen Kirche steht deshalb in diesem Jahr unter dem Motto „Leuchten! Sieben Wochen ohne Verzagttheit“. Wir laden Sie ein, von Aschermittwoch bis Ostern mit uns unterwegs zu sein. „Licht an!“ heißt es in der ersten der sieben Wochen. Wir werden genau hinschauen: auf unsere Ängste (Woche 2) und auf das, was uns trägt und Kraft gibt (Woche 3). In der Mitte der Fastenzeit, der vierten Woche, strahlen und leuchten wir selbst. Von da an rückt Ostern immer näher, und wir gehen gemeinsam (Woche 5) durch die dunkle Nacht (Woche 6) in den hellen Morgen (Woche 7). In den sieben Fastenwochen geht es nicht allein um innere Erleuchtung, sondern auch um die Ausstrahlung auf andere. Werden wir unser Licht auch anderen schenken? Werden wir Helligkeit bringen? Mit unseren Worten, Gesten, unserem Tun?

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

On "Fat Tuesday," members and friends gathered for a time of fellowship, food, and fun. A good time was had playing Bingo, sipping on coffee, and nibbling on original "Fastnachts" (German-style donuts especially made for Fat Tuesday).

A big "thank you" to Immanuel's Member Care Team for organizing and hosting this event.



Fat Tuesday Celebration



Congratulations to Diana S. on passing her Emergency 911 intake call exams.
Way to go!

Parade

"Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I feel my sins. They bite, chase and frighten me. Where shall I go? I look to You, Lord Jesus Christ, and despite my weakness, I believe in You. I hold fast to You, and I am certain that You said, 'Whoever believes in me will have eternal life.'"

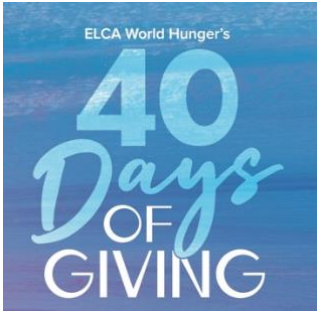
— Martin Luther

IN CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY



We extend our Christian Sympathy to the family and friends of **Elisabeth Pohl**, who joined The Church Triumphant on February 4. Funeral services were held on February 14, with Pastor Hahn officiating. Please keep Elisabeth's family and friends in your prayers.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



More than 820 million people - that's about 11 percent of people in our world today - are hungry. At some point in 2017 (the most recent year available), more than 40 million people in the United States were food insecure, or unsure where their next meal might come from.

As members of the ELCA, we are called to respond. **We invite you to set a goal for your giving to ELCA World Hunger as part of 40 Days of Giving.** Write it down and refer back to it throughout the season.

At the end of the Lenten season, make your contribution online through Immanuel (<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-YRF0/campaign/C-ZDBW>) or write a check to Immanuel Lutheran Church, with ELCA World Hunger on the memo line.

"If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday" (Isaiah 58:10).



Thank you for your continued support of the local food bank. Your donations of nonperishable goods are appreciated!



SOUP-ER BOWL SUNDAY!

The members and friends of Immanuel donated 344 cans of soup in support of Soup-er Bowl Sunday—far surpassing our goal.

The cans were blessed by Pastor Hahn on Soup-er Bowl Sunday and will be delivered to Feast of Justice.

Thank you to all who contributed! Your generosity is greatly valued.



From: Rachel Wind, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*Dear Immanuel Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your generous gift to the ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)... With your gifts, you are putting God's love into action--living faithfully, witnessing boldly, serving joyfully, and giving abundantly. Your generosity allows [the ELCA] to continue to spread the good news of Jesus Christ by equipping leaders, positioning communities to grow, and sharing the love of a faithful and abiding God. With gratitude! RW, 2-7-2023*

I would like to express my gratitude for the many ways in which you helped me celebrate my 36th ordination anniversary. Your participation at the celebration coffee hour on 2/19, your texts, emails, cards, phone calls, and surprise gifts mean the world to me. Thank you for your kindness and your partnership in ministry.

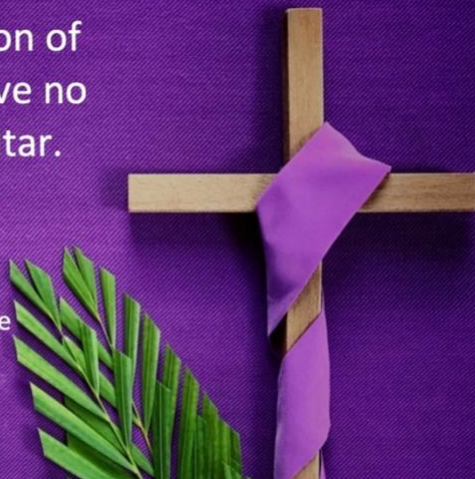
God's Peace,
Pastor Hahn




Recently, Christine B. delivered to the food bank the food donations given by members and friends of Immanuel to assist hungry neighbors. The food donations filled her spacious SUV. Pastor Hahn and Anthony B. helped with loading.

During the season of Lent, we will have no flowers at the altar.

The absence of flowers during this season of austerity and simple reflection will amplify the resurrection message of the Easter flowers when they arrive.



MARCH 2023

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|---|---|-----------|---|
| Reminder: Daylight Saving Time will start on March 12. Turn clocks <i>forward</i> one hour.  | | | 1 10:00 AM Bible Study 11:11 AM English Meditation 7:00 PM English Meditation | 2 9:30 AM Lower Bucks Conference | 3 | 4 9:30 AM Immanuel German School |
| 5 2nd Sunday in Lent 10:30 AM Combined Worship with Holy Communion Followed by the annual church meeting 6:30pm Evening Worship | 6 | 7 1:30 PM Member Care Team 7:00 PM Evangelism Team 7:30 PM German Meditation | 8 10:00 AM Bible Study 11:11 AM English Meditation 7:00 PM English Meditation | 9 Immanuel Language School Testing | 10 | 11 9:30 AM Immanuel German School |
| 12 3rd Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM English Service 11:00 AM German Service | 13 | 14 7:30 PM German Meditation | 15 10:00 AM Bible Study 11:11 AM English Meditation 7:00 PM English Meditation | 16 10:00 AM Committee of Deans | 17 | 18 9:30 AM Immanuel German School 2:30 PM St. Patrick's Day Outreach Event |
| 19 4th Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM English Service 11:00 AM German Service <i>Both services with Holy Communion</i> 6:30pm Evening Worship NEWSLETTER DEADLINE | 20 7:00 PM Congregation Council | 21 7:30 PM German Meditation | 22 10:00 AM Bible Study 11:11 AM English Meditation 7:00 PM English Meditation | 23 | 24 | 25 9:30 AM Immanuel German School |
| 26 5th Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM English Service 11:00 AM German Service | 27 | 28 7:30 PM German Meditation | 29 10:00 AM Bible Study 11:11 AM English Meditation 7:00 PM English Meditation | 30 | 31 | |