



Immanuel-Trinity Lutheran Church

The Beacon November 2025



Luke 6:20-21 (MSG)
20 Then he spoke: You're blessed when you've lost it all. God's kingdom is there for the finding. 21 You're blessed when you're ravenously hungry. Then you're ready for the Messianic meal. blessed when the tears flow freely. Joy comes with the morning.

Dear Partners in the Gospel,

We are officially coming into the holiday season. The holiday season brings much joy to most. Thanksgiving and Christmas are meant to be spent with family and friends. Yet many who have lost loved ones, fight the emotions of joy and grief simultaneously. The second anniversary of my nephew Jack's suicide has just passed in mid October. I wanted to share with you all a reflection of grief as shared by Jack's father, my brother, John. He writes, "Life is beautiful, terrible, and strange" – Concrete Blonde

It's been two years since Jack left us, and honestly, I'm still not sure how the world keeps spinning. But here we are! Instead of the usual trip down memory lane, let's talk about life, with a wink and a smile—just like Jack would want.

JACK'S SIGNATURE MOVE

If you knew Jack, you know he had a "greeting" that was... let's say, uniquely his. The kid loved flipping the bird. As a parent, I couldn't help but laugh at his little act of rebellion, especially when it came with that mischievous grin. That was Jack: a little bit of trouble, a whole lot of heart.

GRIEF

Grief is the price of love. It's earned through the depth of our connections, the memories we hold, and the pain of loss. Since losing Jack, I've learned that grief can be overwhelming—sometimes it crashes over you like a wave, other times it sits quietly in the background, always present. It changes with time, but it never truly leaves. It's a reminder of how much we loved, and how much we've lost.

JESUS WEPT

John 11:35 is the shortest verse in the Bible, but for me, it's one of the most profound. It reminds us that even in faith, it's okay to break down, to weep openly and without shame. In these years since Jack's passing, I've come to understand the difference between crying and weeping. Weeping is raw and honest and cleansing.

LONELINESS

I am surrounded by incredible friends, family, and colleagues, and I am grateful for every one of them. But losing a child to suicide brings a loneliness that is hard to describe. It's a solitude that can exist even in a crowded room, a sense of being set apart by an experience few can truly understand. I've always been an extrovert, but now I sometimes feel alone in places that used to feel like home. If you've been through this, you know what I mean.

HAPPINESS

It may sound surprising, but happiness is still possible—and it's okay to feel it. We've had moments of joy as a family, with friends, and in our community, even after Jack's passing. I've learned that happiness, grief, and loneliness can coexist. You don't need anyone's permission to feel joy.

Since losing Jack, life hasn't paused. We've faced job changes, surgeries, car accidents, mental health struggles, and more. Sometimes it feels relentless, as if life is testing how much we can take. But even in the hardest moments, happiness is possible. If you follow me on FB, you have been bombarded with my toothless smile.

TALK

One of the greatest comforts is hearing Jack's name, sharing stories, and keeping his memory alive. I've found strength in therapy and in honest conversations about loss and mental health. Speaking publicly about Jack and our journey is never easy, but it's meaningful. If sharing our story helps even one person feel less alone, it's worth it. I've had the privilege of speaking to multiple groups over the last few years and find it very rewarding.

DO SOME MANUAL LABOR

Working with your hands can be healing. Some people do woodworking, pottery, yoga, or yard work. For me, it's been getting my hands greasy working on our family fleet of cars. There is no better way to get out emotion, use your brain, and let out a thousand cuss words than working on cars. Engaging your brain and body is healing.

LOVE

All we have is love. Since losing Jack, love from family and friends has been amazing. It's overwhelming as I write this to think of all the things people have said and done for us over the last two years. Just know, I see you. I strive to pay it forward. I miss Jack. I miss his grin, his kindness, and spirit. And yes, I even miss him flipping me the bird. Love you buddy.

In this holiday season, keep in your prayers those who grieve. The empty chair at the Thanksgiving table, the empty Christmas stocking hanging on the mantle are reminders of the seasons of life and the frailty of our broken humanity. May we keep the compassion of Jesus close to our hearts throughout this holiday. May God bless those who grieve.

Pastor Tom
Your Servant in Christ

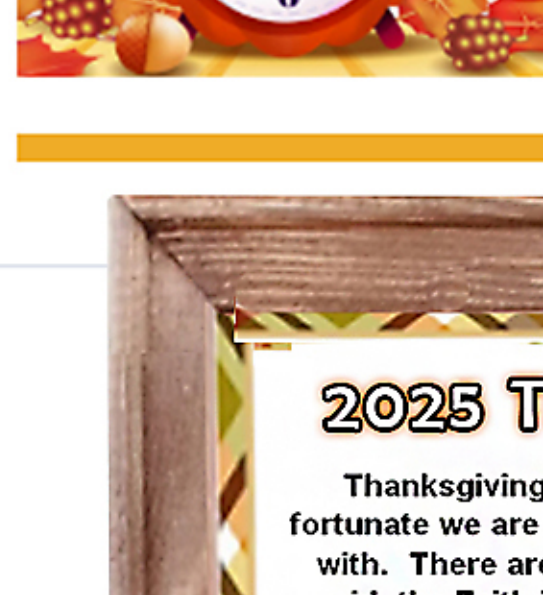
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NRSV)

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven."

Over the last 40 years, Sue and I have had a season of Ministry.... 10 churches, 8 communities, and thousands of people later, Sue's season of ministry has come to a conclusion. As many of you know, over the past three years, our journey has been down the road of Alzheimer's disease. In the past months, it's become painfully obvious as her caregiver, that she was no longer safe in our home. I no longer have a roommate. We moved Sue to Elijah's Place in the Miraveda complex in Oshkosh. Her new address is:

Elijah's Place
Sue Sheffer-Meyer
1551 Southland Ave
Oshkosh WI 54904

Thank you for your patience and prayers during our families' difficult time. I hope to soon be back in the office in the mornings, and resume my visitation responsibilities that have been delinquent during my time as her caregiver. We are both doing as well as we can, during this transitional period. We will cherish your continued prayers. "God is good all the time, and all the time God is good!" PT



Remember...
Daylight Savings Time
ends this Sunday,
November 2nd.
Set your clocks back
Saturday night.

2025 THANKSGIVING MEAL

Thanksgiving is the time of year many of us reflect on how fortunate we are in having good food to eat and people to share it with. There are many folks who are not as fortunate, with that said, the Faith in Action Team have been diligently working to make Thanksgiving a little bit better for many and are requesting your support in our community service.

Immanuel Trinity Lutheran Church is collaborating with the Church of Peace and the Broken Bread Food Pantry again this year in bringing 800 Thanksgiving Meals to various locations:

Thanksgiving Day, November 27th from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

WE WILL BE DISTRIBUTING MEALS AT:

Immanuel Trinity Lutheran Church
20 Wisconsin American Dr.
920-921-4545

Church of Peace
158 S. Military Rd.
920-921-8215

St. Katherine Drexel Shelter and parking lot
358 N Peters Ave

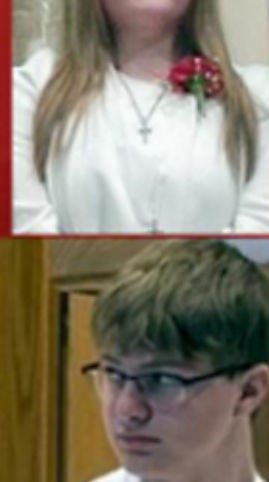
All left over meals will be taken to the Broken Bread Food Pantry to be distributed the next day Friday which is their typical distribution day.

There will be many opportunities to volunteer and/or donate for the cause. We will have signs posted in the Narthex as well as updates in the bulletin.

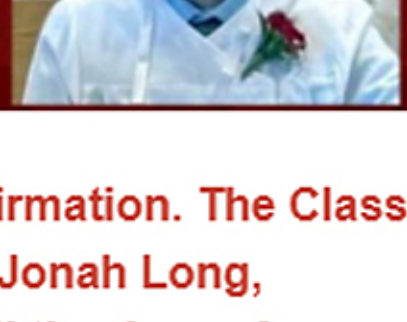
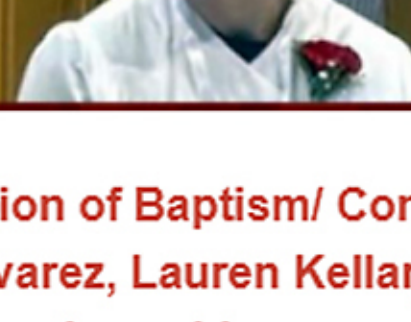
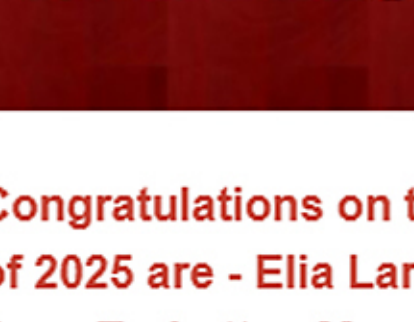
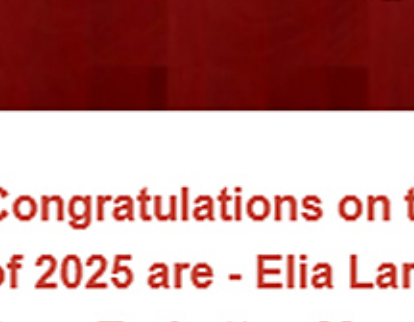
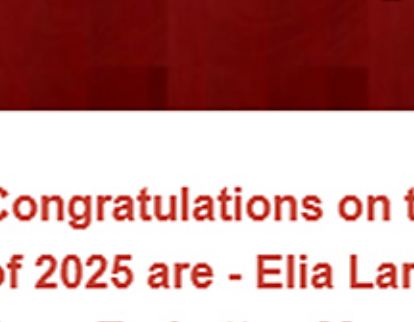
God's Blessing, Faith in Action Team



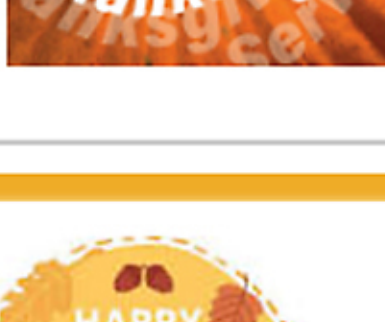
Confirmation Class 2025



Elia Larson
Taya Alarez
Lauren Kellar



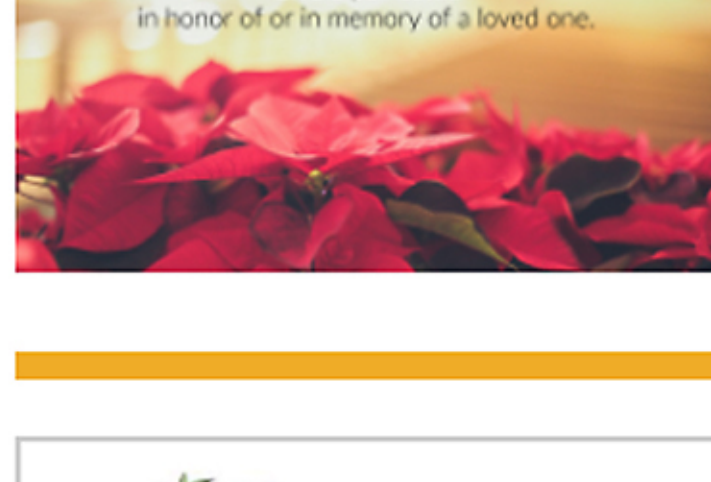
Congratulations on their Affirmation of Baptism/ Confirmation. The Class of 2025 are - Elia Larson, Taya Alvarez, Lauren Kellar, Jonah Long, Joey Tschetter, Mac Duehring. May Jesus bless you all the days of your lives.



Please join us...
Thanksgiving Eve Worship with
Holy Communion on Wednesday,
November 26 at 6:00pm
Followed by a Pie/Dessert/Coffee
Social



The Church and Office will be
CLOSED
Thursday, Nov. 27
Have a pleasant day!!!



Poinsettia Donation

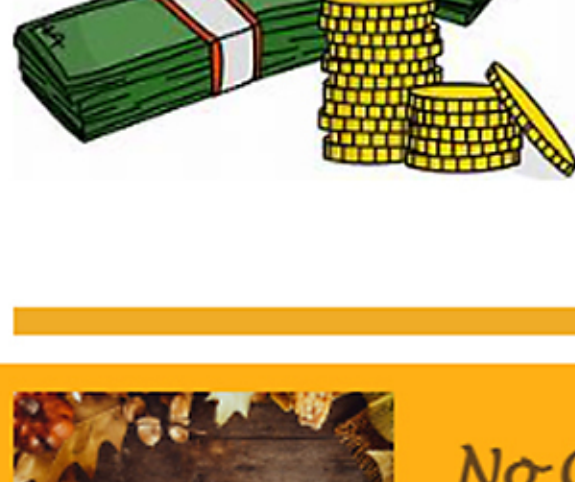
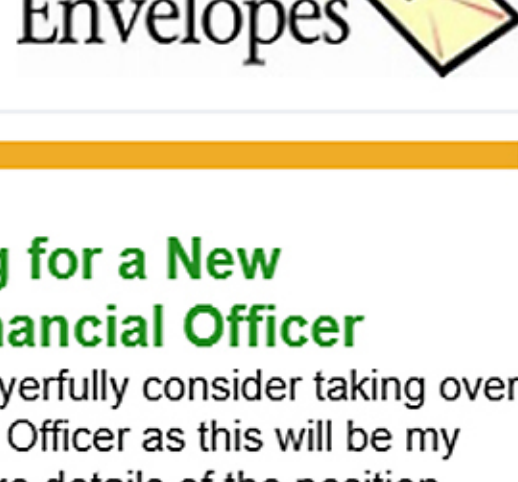
On November 29, envelopes to order poinsettias will be available in the Narthex and on the table outside the church office. Poinsettias may be taken home after Christmas Day services or you may indicate if you wish them to be distributed to shut ins. Deadline is Sunday, December 7.



Memorial given in memory of Chad VandeBerg by
Ruth Auchtung.

2026 Giving/Offering Envelopes

Due to the cost of envelopes plus mailing cost, if you only give on line and do not use an envelope, we will not be issuing you envelopes. If you wish to still receive envelopes, please let the church office know.



Looking for a New Church Financial Officer

I would ask that you prayerfully consider taking over the position of Financial Officer as this will be my last year. If you would like details of the position, please call the church office, 920-921-4545, and I would be glad to answer any questions.

Faye Gokey
Financial Officer

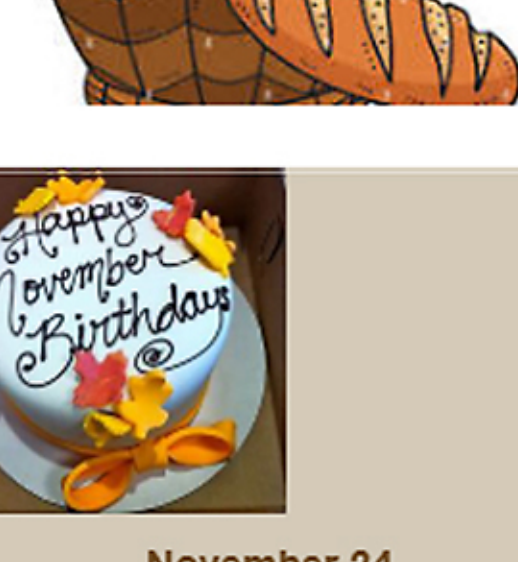


No Confirmation, Spark or Connect
Classes on
Wednesday, November 27.

Loaves and Fishes

We will be serving on Monday, December 1st, 2025 The recipe will be chicken/turkey casserole, 1st. 2025 with leftover turkey for those who want to plan ahead. Pans and recipes will be in Narthex 2 weekends prior to date. 2026 dates will be posted in the December Newsletter.

Thank you all for your continued participation,
Ray and Tess Schwartz
Loaves and Fishes Coordinators



November Birthdays



November 1
Jonah Long
Thomas Soukup

November 11
Keshia Lueck
Marion Blakely

November 24
Kailyn Lefebvre
Lisa Triatik

November 2
Jeffrey McAndrew

November 14
Liberty Christian
Karla Wagner

November 26
Daniel Sing
Linda Karls
Thomas De Montmollin

November 3
Michael Steinbrecher

November 16
Sara Gutman
Mike Rudolph

November 27
Alyssa Stephenson
Cindy Taylor
Terry Long

November 6
Christina Schuetter
Mary Randall
Tammy Guse

November 17
Henry Grafton

November 28
Shar Raube

November 9
John De Montmollin
John Dilling
Richard Hannemann

November 18
Joyce Spannbauer

November 29
Patrick Hansen

November 22
Richard Krause

November 30
Julia Naker