

Generations of Generosity

Stories of Generosity of Time, Talent, Treasure and Hospitality over the last 125 years

Compiled by Nancy Marks
September 24, 2023



During the month of October 2023, Immanuel celebrated 125 years of ministry. In 2002 as we were beginning our first strategic planning process, I had the pleasure and challenge to put together an afternoon presentation to share with members of Immanuel a little glimpse at the history of Immanuel. I poured through some of the old scrapbooks, read information written by others, and even read some of the minutes from meetings of the early church. In addition, some of our confirmands interviewed some of the members of Immanuel about their memories. Many of those videos are included here. Through it all, what always struck me was how generous the members of Immanuel have been over the years and how they prepared for the future, maybe not even knowing they were doing it. What they did back then has had an impact on the kind of church family we are today. I am thankful to be a part of the ministry here at immanuel and share some of these stories of generosity.

This presentation was shared during worship on September 24, 2023 to kick off our 125 celebration. It included scripture, pictures, stories, videos, prayers and songs.

The links to the videos are included as QR codes (point the camera of your mobile device at the QR code and go to the website link) Also included are the links to the videos on youtube.

You can view the whole presentation by clicking on the QR code at the right.

This video and many other stories of Immanuel's history can also be found on the our History Corner webpage

www.imluchurch.org/history-corner



Generations of Generosity- Immanuel 9/24/23

Generations of Generosity

Introduction - Over the past 125 years, many members of Immanuel have shared generosity of time, talents and financial resources in so many ways. Today as we celebrate 125 years, we are reminded of just a few of the stories of generosity of time, talent, treasures and hospitality throughout the years.

Generations of Generosity - Time

A Reading from Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness;
come into God's presence with a song.
Know that the Lord is God,
our maker to whom we belong;
we are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.
Enter the gates of the Lord with thanksgiving
and the courts with praise;
give thanks and bless God's holy name.
Good indeed is the Lord,
whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from age to age.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**



REFLECTIONS

Organization

- Home of Mr and Mrs. John Berglin
- 13 persons present
- 11 others signed the Charter Roll
- Rev A.E. Gustafson of Helena presided
- The Swedish Evangelical Emanuel Congregation



Rev A.E. Gustafson

On October 20, 1898, Mr and Mrs John Berglin generously opened their home to the organizational meeting to begin a Swedish congregation. Thirteen people were present and eleven others signed the first charter. The Rev. A. E. Gustafson of Helena presided at this meeting and the infant church was called The Swedish Evangelical Emanuel Congregation.

Over the next two years, members generously opened their homes for the infant congregation to meet only monthly since there was no church available to them. They did try to buy a building, but no purchase was made.

Charter Members



- Charter Members: John A and Johanna Swanson's Family
- in about 1917
- Gordon Swanson's Grandparents

© 1978 Immanuel Church

On January 22, 1900, Pastor Gustafson announced his resignation. Sufficient progress had not been made to continue the work and nothing more was attempted in five years.

1905- Reorganized

- Pastor Herman Lind of Anaconda presiding
- Petitioned Augustana Synod for membership
- Built the first church on Alder Street



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In February 1905, a student, H.F. Johnson, presided at the services and Rev. Herman Lind from Anaconda was called to reorganize the congregation. Members petitioned the Augustana Synod for membership and became a part of the church at large. A church building was built on Alder street. Several pastors served over the next 20 years.

In August 1919, Pastor E.A. Palm came to Immanuel. It was in that year that the confirmation class was taught in the English language and many services were conducted in English. Over the next 25 years, changes were made to the building and several more pastors served Immanuel.

Pastor E.A. Palm- 1919

- Church service evolved from Scandinavian language to English
- Confirmation first taught in English



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Immanuel Congregation 1927



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In those early years on Alder street, members generously gave of their time to keep the church going. Members would come early to get the fire going in the furnace to warm up the building. Families took turns cleaning the building and assisting with worship.

THE LADIES AID

The Ladies Aid was an organized group of women who, according to lifetime member, Gordon Swanson (grandson of one of the charter members), ran the church.



A Story- Ladies' Aid Society
Shared by Ina Swanson

RECORDED IN 2002



Listen to this recording made in 2002, where Ina Swanson shared her Ladies' Aid Memories.

Ina Swanson Ladies Aid Memories



Ladies Aid Memories- Ina Swanson

<https://youtu.be/cTYN7RRzMKg>



2023 Immanuel Ladies Aid Singers

We were fortunate to have some of our Ladies share a song about the Ladies Aid Society **SONG: Women share song Ladies Aid Society.**



TEACHING

Christian Education



Christian Education



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Throughout the years members have generously shared their time to **TEACH**. Photos in our history share teachers teaching Sunday School on Alder street and at the “New Church” on South Avenue. In 2017, Sunday School evolved into our Family Faith Gatherings where families meet and learn together.

Christian Education



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY



NAOMI CIRCLE

Women's groups have met throughout the years. In the early years they were called Ladies' Aid groups and then Circles. The Naomi Circle still meets monthly. **Men** have also had their Bible studies throughout the years.

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During Covid in 2020 Christian Education adapted into Book studies on Zoom.

Christian Education- on Zoom!



BOOK STUDIES ON ZOOM



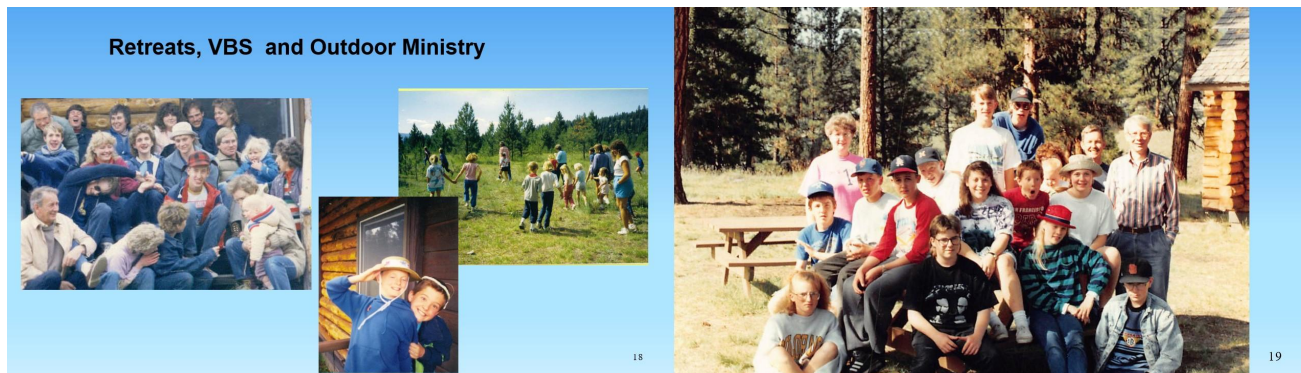
GROW FOR KIDS IN 2020

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CAMP IMLU



Between 1952 and 1999, Time was also generously given to support the church owned **Camp Imlu**- a camp on the Clearwater River. Over the years, members gave of their time to build the lodge and the dormitory.



It was a place where retreats were held for youth, adults, and families and many connections were made over meals and recreation. Sadly, In 1996 the State of Montana increased the cost of the lease dramatically, eventually with the cost of the lease out of reach. In 1999, Camp Imlu was sold with the proceeds going to start the Immanuel Endowment Fund.

SMORGASBORDS

Smorgasbords have been a community event even as far back as the 1930's.

Smorgasbords- Alder Street- early as 1939



Waiting for Smorgasborg on Alder St.

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY
OCTOBER 25 and 26
 5 to 8:00 P. M.
Immanuel Lutheran Parish Hall
 434 ALDER ST.
 1/2 Block West of the Underpass

For the Benefit of Immanuel Church Building Fund

MENU

Imported Sardines	Cheese
Deviled Eggs	Anchovies
Pickled Herring	Smoked Salmon
Summer Sausage	Kipperd Herring
Baked Ham Bits	Meat Balls in Juice
Celery Hearts	Sweet Pickles
Pickled Beets	Potato Sausage
Swedish Brown Beans	Small Boiled Potatoes
Baked Salmon with Cream Sauce	
Rolls	Swedish Limpa
Carrots and Peas	Knackebrod
Lingon Berries	Rice Pudding
Assorted Swedish Cookies	Swedish Frukstoppa
	Coffee

Price \$2.00 Per Plate

Remember Last Year?



Scandinavian Smorgasbord

Fun, Food, & Fellowship



- Served 300-400 people annually



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Beginning again in the 1980's, the church Lutfisk, Lefse and Meatball Dinners or **Smorgasbords** involved the time to raise funds to support Camp Imlu and other Outreach efforts in our community. Friends of Immanuel generously gave of their time preparing cookies, lefse, and 200 pounds of meatballs, to peel potatoes, and serve up to 300-400 people. It included lots of time and fellowship with others.

QUILTERS

QUILTERS



QUILTERS

Over the years, **QUILTERS** have generously shared their time. In the 70's and 80's the Ruth Unit made and sold quilts and donated the proceeds to Lutheran World Relief and the Poverello Center. They also made quilts for the beds at the Poverello when it opened its doors on Ryman in the early 80's. Since the late 1990's quilters at Immanuel have provided quilts for families who receive gifts, groceries and individual quilts for our Giving Tree at Christmas time.

PRAYER: *Gracious God, you have promised a time for everything under heaven. We give thanks for generations before us who volunteered their time and for those today who willingly offer it to lead and support our ministries. Embrace and welcome those whose time on earth is over, comfort us in times of grief, and help us to trust that our times are securely in your hands until the day you fulfill all time with your eternal presence and everlasting peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.*

Generations of Generosity - Treasure

A Reading from 2 Corinthians

9:6-15 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written,

"He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

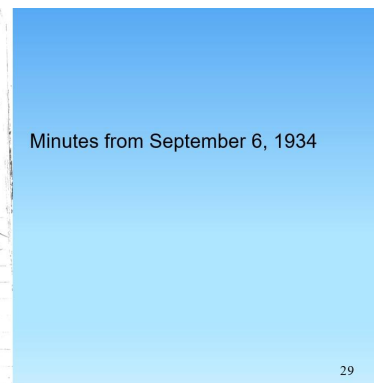
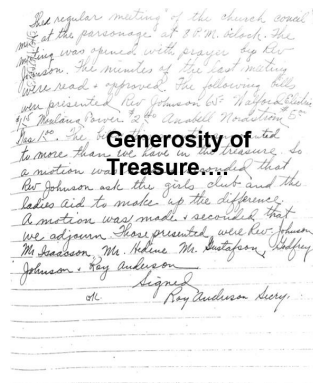


REFLECTIONS

SUPPORT FOR THE CHURCH BUILDING

IMMANUEL has a long history of generosity of sharing their treasures- financial resources to support the church building!

A great example was the 1933 minutes of the council meeting that shared this quote. *"The bills this month amounted to more than we have in the treasury. So a motion was made and seconded that Rev Johnson ask the girls club and ladies aid to make up the difference."*



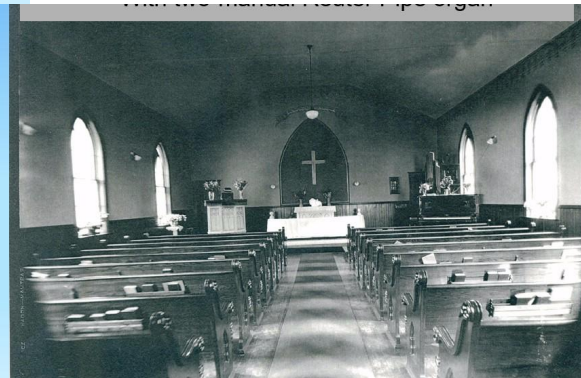
Let it be done!

Minutes: September 16, 1934



A week later a special council meeting was held with this in the minutes
*"Reverend Johnson told the council that one of our church members wishes to build and pay all expenses to erect a new front entrance on the church. They talked over this proposition and decided to **let it be done.**"*

Through the years, the church on Alder financial support was found to make many improvements. By 1943, the church was valued at \$15,000. It included a spacious chapel for worship with a two manual Reuter pipe organ.



Parish Hall



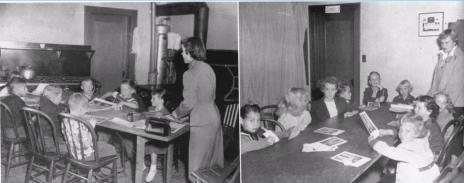
It also had a large and beautifully furnished parish hall, with one of the most modern and up to date kitchens in the city and a basement for Sunday School and Luther League activities.

THE NEW CHURCH

As the church grew by 1953 it had a membership of 260 with **150** children. The church council decided it was time to build a new church. The focus was on the children. A quote from the campaign book said. "We need a larger sanctuary and most of all we need a modern and well-equipped church school for our children. It is hard to teach a child to worship God in the beauty of holiness in an unattractive room.

Our church basement was not planned for use in a modern program of Christian education and cannot be adapted to furnish the facilities that are needed. As our friends and members entrust to us their most precious possession—their children—we should be concerned that our Church offers the very best within our power and means.”

1953-Church Building Fund Campaign



Note the furnace in the background!

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Ground breaking October, 1954



Two living charter members: Mrs. Alma Anderson and Mrs. Anna Brogan

John Kariberg, Paul Hoylo, A.P. Isaacson, Carl Lindborg
Carl Lundquist, O.J. Ballas, William Fox,
Reverend Roderick Johnson

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Cornerstone Laid May 30, 1955

Cornerstone Laid for Immanuel Lutheran Church



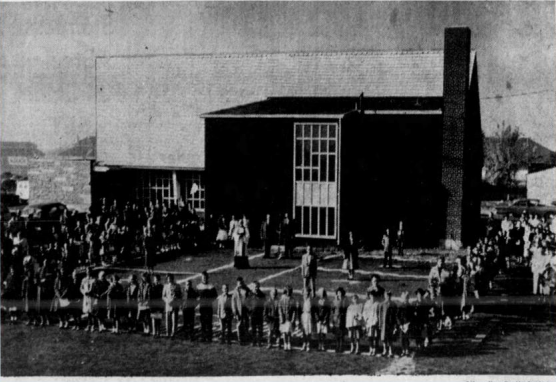
Dedicated September 1955

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The funds came through for the \$120,000 building. Groundbreaking was in the fall of 1954, the cornerstone was laid the following spring in 1955 and the sanctuary with classrooms in the basement was dedicated in September of 1955! (There must not have been a lot of permits needed!)

Ground was broken for the Education wing in 1958. The Daily Missoulian reported: “Immanuel Lutheran Church Sunday School children broke ground Sunday for an education building to be added to the church. For the ceremony, the children of the church stood on a chalk outline of the new building, on which work will begin Monday. “ Do you think you can find Jim Bendickson or Karen Iverson in this photo?

Education Building Ground Broken at Immanuel Lutheran Church



Educational unit- Dedicated May 1958

“Walls of the Children”

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ACCESSIBILITY

When the building was built in 1955, the focus was on children- all who could easily go up and down stairs, but as time went on accessibility became the more of a focus. In 1984, Immanuel was remembered in the will of the Hemgrens who left \$33,000 for a permanent memorial. The Hemgren Addition was added that included an accessible entrance, a handicap-accessible bathroom and a meeting room we call the Hemgren Room) at the sanctuary level.

Accessibility- Hemgren Room 1984

Added

- Accessible Entrance
- Accessible Bathroom
- Meeting Room (Hemgren Room)



Carl Wetterstrom, Swede Gustafson, Pastor Ranlett, Harold Mast

Generosity- care for building



2002 Capitol Improvement Campaign- many upgrades
2008 New boiler
2010 New roof- Education Building
2012 Parking lot repaved



Members have always taken great pride in the upkeep for the building- Financial support has been available to repair the roof, replace the furnace and general upkeep of the building.

As some of our members grew older and less mobile, the dream of an elevator and better accessibility was a goal for every strategic plan beginning in 2001. From 2011- 2018, the Accessibility Team met and planned and the generosity of the congregation helped to fund some many ways to make Immanuel more accessible. Listen to this story of how the dream for Accessibility has changed the way we do ministry at Immanuel **VIDEO More than Just an Elevator**
<https://youtu.be/8gt6Svj9jQA>



More than Just an Elevator

PRAYER: Generous God, all we have and all that we are belong to you. By your Spirit, our church is beautifully furnished and able to meet many needs. We give thanks for this place to gather and for those who have given financial gifts throughout the years to support and further the ministry of Immanuel. Help us to gladly give a portion of all you have given us that we might proclaim our trust and confidence that you provide and care for us and all living things, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Generations of Generosity - Talent

A Reading from Romans 12:1-8 /
appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be

conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

*Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.***



REFLECTIONS

TALENTS- Artisans. Luther Wall



**CROSS
SWEDE GUSTAFSON
& KEN SWANSON**



**COMMUNION RAIL
KEN SWANSON &
MATT SWANSON**

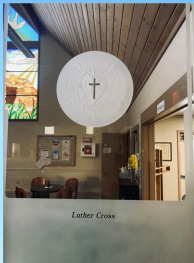


ARTISTS

Immanuel has been blessed with many talented people who have shared their art within our building.

From The Luther Wall, designed as a “master’s project” in 1969 by Maxine Blackner. to the Cross built from a tree from Camp Imlu and built by Swede Gustafson and Ken Swanson. Other examples include the Communion Rail built by Ken and Matt Swanson.

**ETCHED WINDOWS
BOB JACOBSON**



**STAINED GLASS WINDOWS
JAN (BENDICKSON)
CROISSETIERE**



The etched windows at the back of the sanctuary crafted by Bob Jacobson and the beautiful stained glass windows that were designed and created by Jan Bendickson Crossietier are more examples of talented artists

Artisans have been generous in sharing their talents through the building of the Little Library on our Front Lawn- designed to look like the Church on Alder by Judy Wellert and built by a group led by Mick Hanson.

Even the red chairs behind the altar were designed by Marcy Sohlberg and needlepointed by Lenus Ekstrand. The list goes on

**LITTLE LIBRARY
MICK HANSON, JUDY
WELLERT & CREW**



**CHAIRS ON ALTAR
LENUS ECKSTRAND**



and on. Read more about these and other artists in our Arts and Artifacts Book found on the website and also in the Heritage Cabinet on the loft level.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Music Through the Years



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Choir through the years



Members have been generous with their **musical talents** throughout the years. Listen to this story recorded in 2002 by Ina Swanson about her memories about music at Immanuel.



Music At Immanuel - Ina Swanson



A Story- Nudged by the Holy Spirit

JIM BENDICKSON

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A pivotal time in Immanuel's history was when Jim Bendickson was nudged by the Holy Spirit (and Pastor Greg Karlsgodt) to create a 'non-traditional' worship service back in 1995.

Listen as Jim shares that story.

VIDEO JIM BENDICKSON's Spirit Alive story
<https://youtu.be/hu4ZuhOjg2U>



Spirit Alive- Jim Bendickson

WORSHIP & MUSIC
2001- TWO WORSHIP SERVICES




5 WORSHIP BANDS



2001 Phyllis Huber hired to be Director of Worship & Music, Christian Ed & Youth and Family

In 2001, Phyllis Huber was hired as Worship & Music, Christian Ed and Youth and Family Director. Under Phyllis' leadership, worship evolved into Five Different Worship Bands including a Youth Band and a Men's Group called the Fifth Sunday.

Following Phyllis' vision, Phil Johnston and Liz Hollers continued to lead two services, a contemporary Spirit Alive! worship and a traditional worship. Liz Hollers also composed music and liturgy pieces for Immanuel.

WORSHIP & MUSIC



PHIL JOHNSTON

LIZ HOLLERS



One Blended Service




Allen Sasser-Goehner continued to lead the two worships until the the Covid Pandemic of 2020-2022, alongside culture shifts around church, led to Immanuel offering one "blended" worship.

PRAYER Almighty God, your Holy Spirit equips the church with a rich variety of gifts. We thank you for musicians, artists, teachers, builders, and all who do varied tasks to support Immanuel's ministry. Grant that we may use our diverse gifts to bear witness to Christ in lives that are built on faith and love. Make us ready to live the gospel and eager to do your will, so that we may share with all your church in the joys of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

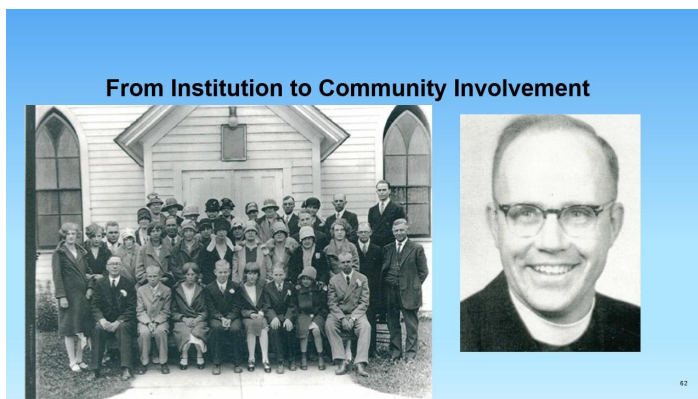
Generations of Generosity – Hospitality

A Reading from Romans 12:9-21 Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.



Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

REFLECTIONS



In 1968, when Immanuel was celebrating 70 years of ministry, Pastor Rod Johnson shared this in an article in the Daily Missoulian "The history of the Protestant churches in the New world is one of frontier situations. When the church came to many communities, it often provided the only place where immigrants who did not yet speak English could communicate

and socialize with others. In a sense, the pastor said, the church of that period provided a refuge for many people and in that sense it also provided a real ministry for them.

The churches primarily were "self centered institutions" He then said that there was a change in involvement. In the past we were

Immigrants- communicate & socialize



building institutions and in some instances the church was the only organization that existed in the community. But today we are becoming more involved in attempting to influence those institutions that exist in society outside the church.”

OUTREACH

During the 60's and early 70's Immanuel began to reach out to our community to make a difference - with time, talents and treasure.



One amazing story was one shared by Connie Lindborg in 2002. She shared a story of how Immanuel had \$3000 to give as seed money and Connie was put in charge.



Listen to the amazing story about what Immanuel chose to support and the outcomes! **VIDEO- What \$3000 Can Do by Connie Lindborg** <https://youtu.be/FIN1ZViBV2A>

What \$3000 Can Do- Connie Lindborg

Look at what \$3000 did to get these very important organizations off the ground. Today... Council Groves low income housing still exists and serves Missoula. The Youth Guidance Homes are Youth Homes and serve 200 children and youth each day from age 2 to 18. It is based out of Missoula, but has local operations in Polson, Kalispell, Hamilton and Helena. And Goodwill Industries continues to serve Missoula



Many more examples of hospitality exist in our history. In the early 1960's Immanuel housed one of the first kindergarten classes in Missoula. For the past 40 years, we have hosted Immanuel's pre-school with certified teachers preparing children for kindergarten.

In 1975, Immanuel along with four other Lutheran churches sponsored a total of 38 Vietnamese and Laotian refugees.

1975- Vietnamese Refugees

- Immanuel Sponsoring five young Vietnamese refugees
- Provided place to live and helped to find job



Habitat for Humanity since 2002



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Family Promise since 2012



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In addition, Immanuel has been involved with Habitat for Humanity since 2002.

We have been one of the host congregations for Family Promise of Missoula since 2012. Immanuel was instrumental in 2018 in assisting with building the Meadowlark to house the Family Housing Center to provide shelter and services for families experiencing homelessness.

Washington Middle School since 2017



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In 2017, Immanuel began a collaboration with Washington Middle School focusing on at-risk youth. This resulted in Immanuel volunteers planning and leading an after-school Flagship program, "Cooking and Crafting" and two Flagship week-long summer camps.

Generosity from Immanuel goes beyond Missoula. We are a strong supporter and active in participating at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. The generosity of Immanuel and its members made the accessible Lakeview Complex possible as well as building the new dock with the accessible lift.

Outreach to Montana- Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

ACCESSIBILITY-
LAKEVIEW COMPLEX

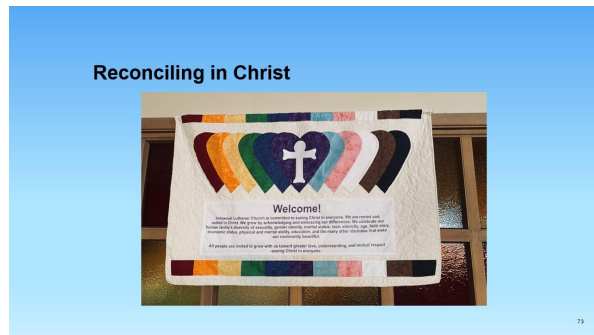
ACCESSIBLE LIFT CHAIR ON
DOCK





We are a leading congregation in Montana Synod for giving Mission support, which in turn support other ministries in Montana, the nation and the World. We continue to work and give gifts through Lutheran World Relief, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response. This year the Marks Apple Days will go to provide orchards through ELCA Good Gifts to third world countries.

Most recently our hospitality has extended by becoming a Reconciling in Christ Congregation- to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program. Our welcome statement hangs in our sanctuary and we practice our mission to “Share the Love of Christ with All!”



PRAYER Merciful God, we call to mind before you all whom it is easy to forget: those who are homeless, destitute, sick, isolated, and all who have no one to care for them. Use the witness of those who have gone before us to inspire among us a generosity of spirit and a hunger for justice. Guide our church’s ministries to bring help and healing to those who are broken in body or spirit, that they may have comfort in sorrow, company in loneliness, and a place of safety and warmth. Send your presence and help to those whose lives have been devastated by fire in Lahaina, the earthquake in Morocco, and floods in Libya. Bless the work of our Lutheran Disaster Response. Send your hope to others in need whom we name before you now aloud or silently...Grant us wisdom to use your blessings to serve humankind and all of creation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Thank you for taking the time to share our generosity stories! Immanuel is indeed blessed to have many generous members who help us to “Share the love of Christ with All”



