

Immanuel Messenger

Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Our 150th Anniversary. 1863-2013

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November 2013

A Word from the Pastor

All Saints Sunday

November 3, 2013

...every saint has his past... every sinner has his future.

One of the heart-warming pastimes of my recovery from surgery was the indexing of thirty years worth of the sermons of my dear old pastor Raymond Shaheen, of blessed memory. He was one of the true princes of the pulpit. The sermons I have access to were his sermons at Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring, Maryland, stretching from 1956-86. Some of you might remember Pastor Shaheen. He preached here at Immanuel and he led a great retreat for us at nearby House of the Redeemer.

I have not read all of those sermons, but I have read a good number of them and they bring back fond memories of my dear pastor. Let me lift up the final words of one of his sermons. It was a sermon on the feast of Saint Mary Magdalene. His closing words go this way:

But in the Resurrection Garden, when no one is around, who is it that makes brave and bold to go even by herself to be at the grave? Mary! — Mary Magdalene. Say it again, the harlot, the prostitute, the fallen woman. Once she was like that. The Church commemorates Mary of Magdala — a sinner, child of the Devil - saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, who paid attention to her.

How are people saved? Not by removing ourselves at some detached distance, not by ignoring the fact that they exist. They are saved when good people pay attention to bad people and hope and pray that the good that's in the bad will one day dominate. That's why I've come to this sacred desk this

morning — happy as all get-out to talk to you about a woman — a good woman ... once a bad woman, but a good woman, who when nobody else was around, there she was. Which leads me to say to you as I walk away from this sacred desk -- and don't you dare ever forget it — every saint has his past... every sinner has his future. This I most certainly believe.

“Every saint has his past... every sinner has his future.” What I love about this line is its celebration of change. For each of us, our story is not yet done. We have our past, and, no doubt, some of that past we regret. But we also have our future. And if we try, our best days can be ahead of us.

The Gospel Lesson for All Saints Sunday is a prime illustration of a good Person paying attention to us middling people and hoping and praying and exhorting us that the good in us should one day dominate the bad in us. Listen to what our Savior Jesus says to us on All Saints Sunday:

²⁷But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from him who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to every one who begs from you; and of him who takes away your goods do not ask them again. ³¹And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.

We have just celebrated Reformation Sunday, and what a glorious celebration it was! Let me lift up one more of Luther's themes: Our Lord's preaching here is not to be reserved for monks and nuns and priests, but is meant for all the baptized. When Jesus says “Love your enemies...bless... give... And as you wish that men would do to you, do so to them,” each of us is worthy of taking this preaching and making it our own.

It is not easy. In my sermon I hope to acknowledge that and to give some encouragement about it.

That is one of the two classic themes of All Saints Sunday: following the blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment.

And the second classic theme of the day again tugs on our hearts: comfort in face of death. This is the Sunday when our intercessions include the list of faithful departed since last All Saints Sunday. It is always a moving thing to hear the names read aloud of those we knew and loved, who now dwell in the nearer presence of Christ.

God bless you all. I hope to see you in church, including All Saints Sunday, November 3rd.

In Christ,



Pastor Gregory P. Fryer

Daylight Saving Time: Nov. 2

Don't forget to put your clocks back one hour on Saturday night, November 2nd.
An extra hour of sleep before All Saints Sunday!

Thank You for Reformation Sunday

Some Notes from Pastor Gregory Fryer

When our recent Reformation service was done, I spoke with some of our Choir members to thank them for the beautiful music in that liturgy. One was smiling and said she figured she would be smiling the rest of the day, she was so grateful to have sung in that service. Another became misty-eyed with gratitude as he spoke of the service. They loved the Bach music they had been singing. And for those of us listening, we know that they sang everything in a loving way.

We were a large congregation that day, Reformation Sunday. It was the final and most complex of our 150th anniversary celebrations. All went well, thanks to the leadership of Music Director Gwendolyn Toth, to the talents and grace of our Choir and Children's Choir and all the instrumentalists that day, to the sermon preparation by theologian David Yeago, to the presiding of Pastor Carol Fryer, to the worship folder preparation and labors of Parish Secretary Karen Rombey, and to the banquet preparation of chef John Stevenson, and to the serving of the banquet by so many workers. Then the day was capped off by the fun Hymn Sing led by Immanuel's Music Director, Gwendolyn Toth, and Thomas Schmidt of Saint Peter's Church, and Rev. Kelly-Ray Meritt who introduced some of the hymns with his usual eloquence and charm.

Besides the contributions of those present on Reformation Sunday, we also were blessed by the prayers and affection of those who love Immanuel Lutheran Church, but could not be present. Much of that affection is expressed in the beautiful letter of greeting sent to us by Pastor David Lotz. We included that letter in the Reformation Sunday worship folder, and we are including it in this newsletter too, next.

We have reached, then, the conclusion of this year's anniversary celebrations. We still have important liturgies ahead of this year. As you can see in this edition of the *Immanuel Messenger*, I especially have the All Saints Sunday and Thanksgiving Eve liturgies on my heart this year. And there are other important upcoming services too, including Christ the King, the Sundays of Advent, and the Christmas liturgies. So, we are not done with this good anniversary year. But we are done with the sequence of celebrations planned by our Anniversary Committee. I am grateful for each one of those celebrations and especially grateful to Anniversary Committee Chair Barbara Edwards for making everything splendid and easy.

Next we have Pastor David Lotz's letter of greeting to us for Reformation Sunday. He has already blessed this congregation time and time again through his Reformation Sunday sermons. Now he lifts up our hearts yet again through this letter of greeting. Enjoy!

27 October 2013

Immanuel Lutheran Church, New York City
c/o The Rev. Gregory P. Fryer, Pastor

My dear members and friends of Immanuel Lutheran Church--and all here gathered on this Reformation Sunday in this Year of Our Lord 2013: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today is plainly a special day, a red letter day in the calendar of the Church at large and of this congregation in particular. It marks the observance of the 496th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation (traditionally dated to October 1517). It also marks what Pastor Fryer is pleased to call the "culmination" of the yearlong celebrations of the 150th anniversary of Immanuel's founding in April 1863.

How fitting, then, that hearts and voices should join in the grand festival music of the choir and instrumentalists, lovingly planned by Dr. Gwendolyn Toth and featuring compositions by the incomparable J. S. Bach, who deserves to be remembered, not least, as a Lutheran theologian of the first rank.

This happy day also marks the return to the pulpit of our dear Pastor Fryer, following his heart surgery last August. Thanks be to merciful God for his speedy recovery; we pray that he will now go from strength to strength. He will be reading a sermon prepared by Professor Dr. David Yeago, a devoted churchman and eminent scholar of the Reformation era, for whom I have the highest regard.

Mention of the pulpit leads me to observe that during my twenty-seven years as a pastoral associate at Immanuel it was my high privilege and solemn responsibility to proclaim the holy gospel of the glory and grace of God on many a Reformation Sunday. Indeed, as early as September 2012, Pastor Fryer kindly invited me to preach yet again today.

Alas, a neurological ailment renders me unstable on my feet and thus severely limits my mobility. I fear I could not readily manage the steps in the chancel much less the streets of Manhattan! This circumstance is a keen disappointment to me and wife Norma. We cherish memories of our happy times in your midst, of joining with you in the Divine Liturgy, of your always warm and welcoming presence, of the affection and esteem you lavished on us over the years. Please be assured that while not bodily present today, we are with you in spirit, in the enduring bonds of Christian faith, hope and love.

My parting word to you is this: ever remember, repeat, and rejoice in your distinctive name: "Immanuel--God with us." Surely this Biblical promise has proved itself true, times without number,

U N I O N

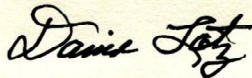
throughout the 150 years since the congregation's formation in the midst of our country's terrible Civil War.

God the Blessed Trinity is faithful, forever true to His Word. He is with us, preeminently, in His Word made flesh, our Lord Jesus Christ, who promises to be with us always, even to the end of the age. And because our risen Lord has death behind Him, He truly has "always" in His gracious keeping, such that we may stake the continuing existence of the Church catholic and the destiny of this local assembly of believers on His unfailing promise.

Hold fast to this Word. Live in it, under it, and out of it.

Immanuel: God with us. This is most certainly true.

Faithfully yours, in Christ



David W. Lotz
Pastoral Associate, 1974-2001

Washburn Professor of Church History, Emeritus
Union Theological Seminary (1968-2001)

Thank You from Pastor Fryer

My recovery from August's open-heart surgery has gone well and I am officially back to work now. I am back in the saddle, glad to say. I recovered at home for ten weeks. Time never lay heavy on my hands. For the first weeks, I was content to simply sit on the sofa much of the day, giving thanks to God for the success of the surgery, and thinking about life and what I hope to accomplish going forward. I have prayed that this experience will make me a wiser pastor.

A good part of the peacefulness of my recovery is that I knew that Immanuel was in good hands with Interim Pastors Kelly-Ray Meritt and Carol Fryer, and with Immanuel's

staff and leaders. I am grateful to each one of you.

I am also grateful to each member and visitor who worshiped at Immanuel these past couple months. Your presence in church strengthens us. I dare even to say that your presence helps save souls. It testifies that faith is still alive in the city. Your presence in worship encourages others and gives them a good example.

And Carol and I want you to know that we are touched and grateful for the cards, gifts, email, and visits we have received during my recovery. Thank you, each one!

“Second Sunday” Evening Worship

Second Sundays and some Holy Days here at the church.
Next one on November 3rd, All Saints Sunday, beginning at 5 p.m.
Led by Rev. Kelly-Ray Meritt

FULLY SATISFIED

Dusk was long and wonderful in the Ozark Mountains, at least in the summers when I would visit my great-grandmother on the quiet edge of Springdale, Arkansas. My great-uncle Bill and his wife lived in the newer and busier part of town, having installed both their mothers—there should be a name for this relationship: co-mothers-in-law?—in an old-fashioned house in a neighborhood with only one streetlight per block, and that one not on Grandma’s end of the street. The house had electricity, city water, and an indoor toilet, but they also maintained kerosene lamps, a well with a hand-pump, and a “necessary” behind the garage—the latter being my great-grandmother’s decided preference: “I don’t sleep in the outhouse” was the polite half of her usual explanation to visiting city-folk.

Electric lights must have seemed like an extravagance to the two widows, each of them older than the twentieth century, or perhaps it was simply their habit to watch the darkness gather at the end of the day. Night came on slowly where the sun dipped under the near ridgeline long before the western sky lost its evening colors. We great-grandchildren would wait with empty jars and nail-perforated lids to catch the fireflies in the back yard, convinced that lighting the kerosene lamp on the porch would delay their appearance. They certainly slowed down their phosphorescence when we tried to turn their glass prisons into indoor night-lights. But what delight for that half-hour when the fireflies wildly signaled each other in the dark grass, and we ran after them, mostly miscalculating the trajectory of their unlit flight!

At Evening Prayer I sometimes think of the sweet leisurely Springdale nightfall, especially at the blessing of light: *“Night is falling and day’s allotted span draws to a close. / The daylight which you created for our pleasure has fully satisfied us, / and yet, of your free gift, now the evening lights do not fail us.”* The twelve hours of each “day’s allotted span”—more in summer, fewer in winter, depending on one’s latitude—are a great gift, but this ancient prayer simultaneously speaks of the span of a human life—sometimes as long as a great-grandmother’s, sometimes tragically cut short—which is also a precious gift. At the end of the day, as at the end of our life, we light a small light against the great darkness, knowing that the One who is pure Light, who shines out from the eternal Light, will continue to shine on us when our weary eyes close in sleep.

Besides our usual second Sunday group spiritual practice (4 p.m.) and sung Evening Prayer (5 p.m.) on Sunday 10th November, we will celebrate a festive All Saints Vespers at 5 p.m. on Sunday 3rd November. The cluster of celebrations—Reformation, 150th congregational anniversary, All Saints, and the commemoration of the faithful departed (or “All Souls”)—come at a time of year when the days grow short in the northern hemisphere, especially noticeable as we revert from Daylight Saving to standard time. Dr. Gwendolyn Toth, at the organ, will alternate with the Schola Cantorum in leading this special service, reflecting the joy of these holy days and singing with all God’s saints of the Light that never fades, of the Life-Giver who fully satisfies us. Please join us.

Another Gift to Immanuel

[Note from Pastor Fryer: We have received another historic light fixture — another beautiful light from olden days here at Immanuel. This one comes from Willy and Karin Goedeke. Like Susan Crosbie, Willy and Karin offer this to Immanuel as a fundraiser for our church's Roof Fund.

We have the light fixture safe and sound thanks to Willy and Karin who brought it to the city and right to our church on their way to catch the boat for a cruise.

So, our Church Council has to put our thinking caps on and come up with a good method of using these historic gifts to raise money for our Roof Fund. Meanwhile, let me plant a seed of an idea: This newsletter, the Immanuel Messenger, flies out all over the land, both to present members, prospective members, and to many, many former members. It might be that you live far away from Immanuel now, but would be glad to have some concrete token of home, sweet home. If so, maybe you would like to own one of these historic light fixtures, and help keep a good roof over our heads in the process.

Here is Willy and Karen's note to me, along with a photo of the light fixture they have given us:]



Dear Pastor Fryer,

It was with great interest that we read the October *Immanuel Messenger* with the letter from Susan Crosbie about the hanging fixtures her father had made from the broken stained glass of Immanuel's windows after the blasting damage.

We too have something from that time in Immanuel's history. After the reconstruction of the balcony, the lamps that hung under the balcony, and could be salvaged, were sold at a fund raiser. I'm not sure when that was, but my wife bought one, and gave it to me as a Christmas present in 1972. We lived directly across the street from Immanuel at the time, at 125 E. 88 St. The lamp was converted from hanging on a chain, with a cross between the lamp and chain, to a ceiling fixture, to fit our lower home ceiling. I no longer have the chain or cross, but the glass and metal lamp is in excellent condition, and has been lighting our foyers for the past 40 years. After reading Susan's letter, I thought that perhaps you would also like this piece of Immanuel's history? We would be very happy to see it come back to Immanuel after all these years.

My wife and I are former members of Immanuel, before we moved to New Jersey in 1973, and good friends of Al & Vi Quirong, Ann Siemer, and Charles Schramm. I was confirmed at Immanuel in 1959.

We wish you a wonderful culmination of Immanuel's 150th Anniversary Celebration!

Sincerely,
Willy & Karin Goedeke

Monday Morning Devotions

Starting up again, Monday, November 4, 8 a.m.

A note from Pastor Fryer

We took a break from our Monday Morning Devotions while I was recovering from surgery, but I am eager to start them up again. Let's begin Monday morning following All Saints Sunday. These are brief devotions at the start of the work week. I read aloud a Bible passage, preach a short sermon on vocation, and we end by praying for the labors of all workers in our city for the coming week.

The service starts at 8 a.m. and goes for about ten minutes. I do not wear my alb and

stole, but simply my black clergy clothes.

That's because I want neighborhood people to recognize me when they see me on the sidewalks of our town. I want them to think that they can turn also to me for pastoral conversation.

By the way, starting the service at 8 a.m. is simply a guess on my part at what would be a helpful time for people on their way to work. I could just as well start it earlier or later than that. So if you have some ideas about that, please share them with me.

Upcoming ARTEK Concerts

ARTEK will again be performing several concerts at Immanuel Church:

- Thursday, November 14th, at 8 p.m. - Music of Beethoven - songs and sonatas by Beethoven, including his famous "Pathetique" Sonata. Gwendolyn Toth and renowned Canadian baritone Nathaniel Watson.
- Sunday, December 29th, at 4 p.m. - More Mozartian Music - Arias, opera overtures and more by Mozart. The ARTEK Orchestra with soloists Sarah Chalfy, soprano; Eric Brenner, countertenor; Philip Anderson, tenor; and Peter Becker, bass-baritone.
- Thursday, February 20th, at 8 p.m. - Music of Bach - Concertos, and Cantatas, including the well-known Coffee Cantata, with soloists Cynthia Freivogel, violin; Laura Heimes, soprano; Peter Becker, bass-baritone; Dongsok Shin and Gwendolyn Toth, harpsichord.

ARTEK will set aside 100 free tickets for members of Immanuel Lutheran Church for each of these concerts. They will be available from Parish Secretary Karen Rombey in the Immanuel Office (212) 289-8128. This is a great opportunity to hear world-class music!

Christ the King Sunday

November 24, 2013

This is the last Sunday of the church year. We are reminded that this world, human history, and our lives come to an end. We are also reminded that the end of our lives, of the world, and of history is the God who is their

beginning and that those who are "in Christ" can look forward to the end of things as the time of the gracious kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thanksgiving Eve

6:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 27th, 2013

With Soloist Tiffany Rosenquist de la Torre

A Note from Pastor Fryer

This service is very much on my mind and heart. I hope you will attend this year.

I have been lingering some with our Immanuel archives this anniversary year. These old records remind us how important Thanksgiving was to earlier generations of folks at Immanuel. The clergy used to write special letters urging people to attend the church's liturgy. The sermons by my old pastor Raymond Shaheen likewise show great earnestness for the church's celebration of Thanksgiving. I know that Thanksgiving means a lot to you as a family, spiritual, and civic holiday. But I am longing for it to be an important church liturgy too.

Especially during this 150th anniversary of our congregation, I think we have reason to express thanksgiving to God.

This matter of our Thanksgiving Eve liturgy has been on my heart for quite a while now. Back in February I asked Choir Member Tiffany Rosenquist de la Torre whether she would be willing to sing a piece from Leonard Bernstein's *Mass* for this liturgy. It is a haunting lament called "Gloria: Thank You." For me, it reminds us that us that life is poorer without a spirit of gratitude. Tiffany said that, yes, she would love to sing this for us. So, that will be a treat. I hope to see you this Thanksgiving Eve.

Caroling at Lenox Hill Hospital

Friday, December 6, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.

On Friday, December 6th, let's meet in the lobby of Lenox Hill Hospital (100 East 77th Street) at 7 p.m. for our annual Christmas caroling and fellowship gathering. After caroling there, we are invited to the

church parsonage (108 East 82nd Street, Apt. 7C) for some refreshments, fellowship, and sitting around the fireplace. Alas, we are not supposed to bring children into the hospital, but otherwise, everyone is welcome!

Fraternité Notre Dame Toy Collection

Once again this year the Sisters of the Fraternité Notre Dame will be hosting a Christmas party for needy children. This year the party will be on Friday, December 13th. They are asking for donations of new toys. If you can give a toy, please wrap it and mark it as to the age of the child and whether it is for a boy or girl. (Please no guns or violent toys.) The Sisters will also accept

toiletries or clothing as they distribute gifts to the hospitalized and homeless as well. No need to wrap these. You may leave your gifts in the narthex on Sunday mornings, or bring them to the church office during the week. The last day for bringing gifts is Sunday, December 8th, as the Sisters will pick them up from the church office on Monday morning, December 9th.

Sunday School Mitten Tree

The Sunday School will have a mitten tree once again this year. Please give the mittens you bring to one of our Sunday School teachers. The mittens will be given to the Fraternité Notre Dame who will

distribute them to needy children. The mitten tree will be put up during the Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 14th.

Baking Workshop: German Christmas Cookies

Join us for baking a selection of traditional German Christmas cookies just in time for the First Sunday in Advent. We will be baking Vanillekipferl, Kokosmakronen, Schokobusserl and the all time classic: Butterplätzchen (Ausstecherle). Hopefully we will have the opportunity to share some of our products during Coffee Hour on December 1st.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, November 30th, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in

Immanuel's kitchen in the undercroft. It will be led by former member Irene Zimmer. It is open for 10 participants - beginners and baking-pros are all welcome. Due to safety concerns we are unable to admit children under the age of 16.

If you have any questions or would like to sign up for the workshop, please contact Parish Secretary Karen Rombey at (212) 289-8128.

Block Party Results!

Again, a warm thank you to Kathy Jolowicz, all her helpers (listed in last month's newsletter) and everyone involved before, during or after Immanuel's second Block Party this past September 28th. Our five tables made \$1,248.56. Listed below is the final total after expenses were deducted:

\$ 1,500.45 -- Immanuel's five tables

\$ 783.00 -- Proceeds from vendors

\$ 1,034.89 -- Expenses

\$ 1,248.56-- Grand Total towards Immanuel's Roof Fund