

Immanuel Messenger

Immanuel Lutheran Church

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A Word from the Pastor

After eight days,
the doors being closed,
Jesus came and said
PEACE
BE TO YOU
Alleluia·Alleluia

Happy Easter Season!

In my opinion, we had a good Lent and Holy Week here at Immanuel. In terms of worship attendance during Holy Week, we were stronger at every point this year compared to last, and I had thought well of last year. Here are the figures:

	Palm Sunday / Passion Sunday	Holy Wednesday	Maundy Thursday	Good Friday Tenebrae	Good Friday Sung Passion	Easter Vigil	Easter Sunday
2009	168	25	68	85	94	88	262
2010	182	33	88	128	133	92	273

So, that is good. And this too is important: the true measure of Holy Week goes beyond attendance at the liturgies, to our lives and souls, that we should be made stronger and better by our faith in Christ and his resurrection.

(Continued)

I have been pondering this recently in relationship to the Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The sixty-fifth anniversary of Bonhoeffer's death was earlier this month, on April 9. He was hanged. It was a final spasm of sin for Hitler's regime. Bonhoeffer was executed by special order of Himmler at the concentration camp at Flossenbergr, just a few days before that camp was liberated by Allied soldiers. Bonhoeffer died at age 39. His opposition to Nazism cost him his *earthly* life, though *eternal* life was far beyond the hands of the Gestapo. Bonhoeffer was content to entrust himself into the hands of our resurrected Jesus, preferring Him to life itself. That is why Bonhoeffer was such a blessing on earth and such a formidable foe of wrongdoing.

In his book *The Cost of Discipleship*, Bonhoeffer wrote this famous line: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." This was straight from Luther, from Luther's explanation of the meaning of Baptism for daily life:

What does such baptizing with water signify?

Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance and be put to death, and that the new man should come forth daily and rise up, cleansed and righteous, to live forever in God's presence.

In God's mercy, many of us are spared that this daily dying to sin should go all the way to the gallows. But Bonhoeffer was not so spared. He taught what he called "costly grace." He taught and lived out of the conviction that grace cost God the life of his Son, "and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us."

Even more, Bonhoeffer lived out of a kind of joy in Christ -- a delight in Easter such that Bonhoeffer took quite literally the invitation of Jesus to find rest for our souls in him. For Bonhoeffer, Jesus lives, and if he lives, then Bonhoeffer was willing to trust himself over to the one who said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

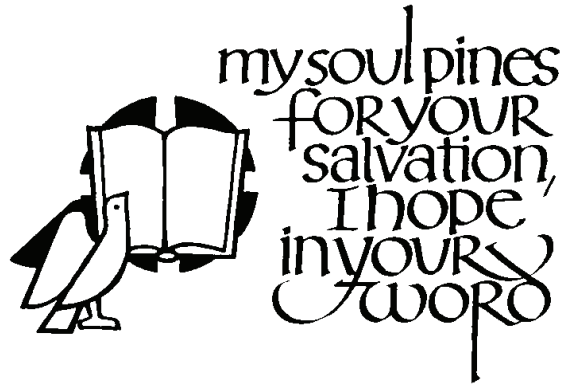
Happy Easter Season, then. Let our Easter faith make us bold unto good works, in the name of him who is risen and to whom belongs the glory, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

In Christ,



Pastor Gregory P. Fryer

“With Joy and Thanksgiving” Building Fund Campaign
Commitment Sunday is soon upon us:
Sunday, April 25



This is what we want, hunger, and pine for: The Word of God. Without that Word, we perish.

But also, we want a new roof for our church. Having a new roof is a humble matter compared to the preaching of the Gospel, but an important matter nonetheless. You all understand that, I am sure.

So, on Sunday April 25, we hope to collect three-year pledges toward a new roof for our church and steeple. Those who will not be able to attend that Sunday will receive a mailing with a brochure and pledge card, etc. That material is scheduled to be mailed out right after Commitment Sunday.

GPF

Midtown Concerts

Midtown Concerts continues in April with concerts at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1:15 p.m. each Wednesday. Each concert lasts approximately 30-40 minutes. Best of all, the concerts are FREE!