



Immanuel Messenger

Immanuel Lutheran Church
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July-August 2023

A Word from Pastor Gregory Paul Fryer

The Sermon on the Mount, Continued

Lectio continua

Dear Members and Friends of Immanuel Lutheran Church,
Your preachers here at Immanuel have resolved to preach on the whole Sermon on the Mount. We are happy about this — to preach on our Lord’s Golden Sermon. Our three-year lectionary does a pretty good job of covering The Sermon, but not a perfect job. Over the course of three years we can hear all of Matthew Chapter 5, and a good stretch of Chapter 6, but not much of Chapter 7. That means that the lectionary never invites us to preach on such passages as these:

- ✦ ⁹Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name... (Matthew 6:9ff, RSV)
- ✦ ¹Judge not, that you be not judged. (Matthew 7:1, RSV)
- ✦ ⁷Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Matthew 7:7, RSV)
- ✦ ¹³Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (Matthew 7:13-14, RSV)

† ¹⁷So, every sound tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears evil fruit. ¹⁸A sound tree cannot bear evil fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. (Matthew 7:17-18, RSV)

And so it is that in thirty years of preaching, I have never preached on “Enter by the narrow gate.” Indeed, I guess I *never will* unless, as we mean to do now, we depart from the Revised Common Lectionary for a while.

If we had reached the Seventh Sunday after Epiphany earlier this year, we would have heard all of Matthew Chapter 5. But as sometimes happens, we moved directly from Epiphany 6 to Transfiguration Sunday. That means that we missed Matthew 5:38-48, concerning retaliation and love of enemies. So that is where we will pick up now. Here is our preaching schedule for July and August:

- 7/2/2023 Matthew 5:38-48, Concerning retaliation and love of enemies, Pastor Gregory Fryer, preaching
- 7/9/2023 Matthew 6:1-18, Almsgiving, Prayer in Secret, the Lord’s Prayer, Pastor Lara Bhasin, preaching
- 7/16/2023 Matthew 6:19-24, True Treasure, The Lamp of the Body, God and Money, Pastor Carol Fryer, preaching
- 7/23/2023 Matthew 6:25-34, Be Not Anxious, Pastor Gregory Fryer, preaching
- 7/30/2023 Matthew 7:1-5, Do Not Judge, Pastor Lara Bhasin, preaching
- 8/6/2023 Matthew 7:6-12, Do Not Profane Sacred Things, Confident Prayer, the Golden Rule, Pastor Lara Bhasin, preaching
- 8/13/2023 Matthew 7:13-20, The Two Ways. A Sound Tree, Pastor Gregory Fryer, preaching
- 8/20/2023 Matthew 7:21-29, The True Disciple, The House Built on a Rock, The Amazement of the Crowds, Pastor Carol Fryer, preaching
- 8/27/2023 Back to Lectionary 21, Pastor Gregory Fryer, preaching

There is good historical precedent for departing from the lectionary — at least some of the time. The church fathers did not preach from a lectionary. And so, St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom, for examples, did not preach from a lectionary. Rather they preached according to *Lectio continua*. That means they preached on whole books of the Bible, preaching their way steadily through the sacred book and then moving on to the next book. We have whole volumes of the sermons of Chrysostom, for example, on Matthew, John, and the Epistles of St. Paul. They are wonderful. They are sublime.

This summer, then, your preachers will be returning to the pattern of the early days of the church as we preach on our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. Please join us as often as you can.

In Christ,
Pastor Gregory P. Fryer

Pastor Lara Bhasin's Ordination to the Holy Ministry of Word and Sacrament

Looking Back at the Third Sunday after Pentecost, June 18, 2023

NALC Bishop Daniel Selbo preached for us on the morning of that good day and then ordained Lara later that afternoon.

Here is a photo of that moving movement when Lara lay prostrate on the floor, as if emptying herself of other ambitions in order to offer herself entirely to ministry in Christ's Church:



Clergy from other states on the East Coast joined us for this ordination. They joined Bishop Selbo in laying their hands on Lara's

head, praying the ancient prayer for the pouring of the Spirit on Lara and her ministry:



It is a happy event to witness the Ordination of a promising candidate. Here Lara is, in the chasuble there in the middle:



We had excellent receptions that day — both following the morning liturgy when Bishop Dan preached and then following the Ordination service. Thank you, everyone, who contributed to that good day!

As you will see from the next three articles, Pastor Lara is ready to dive into ministry among us here at Immanuel. She has already blessed our congregation through her work as our Seminary intern. For this coming year, she plans to continue her work as a high school English literature teacher in Yonkers, NY, and so she will serve at Immanuel part time. But even part time, Lara brings a lot to our congregation. Congratulations, Pastor Lara Bhasin!

The Bible: The Big Picture – A Class for All Ages

A Note from Pastor Lara Bhasin

Start Date: Sunday, September 10 at 10 a.m. in the Martin Luther Room

[But first a note from Pastor Gregory Fryer: A classic challenge for congregations concerns young people after they are confirmed. The spiritual growth of her Confirmands is very much on Lara's heart. So, the beginning point of her thoughts about this class is that it is a class meant for her students who are now confirmed. But I am delighted with her inclination to expand the class to take in all generations. I think that this intergenerational class will be a blessing for everyone who takes part. Please attend as often as you can. Now, back to Lara:]

Please join me for a year-long tour through the Bible. This is a class designed to give us a big picture view of the Scriptures, its main themes, key ideas, and most important stories. Each class will feature one book or set of writings from the Bible, with many visuals, maps, timelines and other aides to help us get a sense of the whole. We will also learn about how the Bible was translated and the canon of Scripture was formed. Each class will feature a PowerPoint presentation with lots of pictures of Biblical art, artifacts, and other charts and diagrams.

This class is designed for all ages, from middle school to adult. I hope it will be a chance for every participant to share what they know, learn something new, and forge new friendships across generations. Each class will be a complete unit on a new topic, so please join whenever you can.

Immanuel Book Club: *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis

Start Date: Wednesday, September 20 at 8 p.m.
in the Martin Luther Room and via Zoom

[Again, a beginning note from Pastor Gregory Fryer: This class on The Screwtape Letters is a follow-up to Lara's popular course on Bonhoeffer's The Cost of Discipleship. Please join these great classes as often as you can. Now, back to Lara:]

And now for something completely different! Letters from... the devil?! Come find out why this book has become a Christian classic, albeit one that the author himself hated writing! In *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis imagines what advice a senior devil would give a junior devil about how to do his job. This short book is funny, theologically insightful, and psychologically profound, and it's guaranteed to spark great conversation. Please join Pastor Lara for food, fellowship, and discussion on the third Wednesday of the month at 8 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room, or sign in via Zoom.

Life-to-Life

Looking Ahead

A Note from Pastor Lara Bhasin

Pastor Carol and Pastor Lara would like to invite you to join the *Life-to-Life Discipleship* experience. *Life-to-Life* is an NALC initiative designed to help Christians be more intentional in living out the Great Commission by focusing on oneness with God and with one another. We would meet as a small group for fourteen weeks for an hour at a time and work our way through the manual.

Both of us have been through the experience ourselves and found it rewarding. It gives participants a chance to strengthen faith and learn how our baptismal vocation applies to every aspect of life. I (Lara) enjoyed it because it is concrete and practical and helped me develop some lasting spiritual friendships.

If you are interested in participating, please let one of us know. Once we have a list of potential participants, we can work together to choose a start date and the best time and place to meet.

The Sunday School Lenten Food Drive

Thank you, Immanuel members, for your generosity. The Sunday School Lenten Food drive was a huge success. We donated 355 pounds of food to The Common Pantry. The Common Pantry was very grateful for our large donation.



Thursday Evening Bible Study

6:30 p.m. in the Martin Luther Room and via Zoom
A Note from Pastor Gregory Fryer

We are studying the Acts of the Apostles. Please join us for this moving story of the Holy Spirit at work establishing the early church.

We meet in the Martin Luther Room, but also via Zoom. I send out the Zoom information in my Sunday morning emails. Let me know if you would like to be added to a special mail list for this class.

Vacation Bible School

August 21 - August 25, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Looking ahead, please save the dates August 21-25 for this summer's Vacation Bible School.

As always, we could use more and more adults to help with VBS. Please see VBS Director Karen Bazik if you could volunteer.

In Our Prayers

IN OUR PRAYERS IN RECENT TIMES: Alan Brook (Matt O'Donnell's father), Karen Miller (Carol Dittbrenner's aunt), Cayle Powell and Raymond Hernandez (Florida family members of Eric and Ester Neubacher), Tracy Leung (Priscilla's cousin), Robert Huckfeldt (David Kiehl's my brother-in-law), Patricia Sanders, David Kiehl, June Dittbrenner (Carol Dittbrenner's mother), Brad Bond (friend of Sigrid Sunstedt), Clifford Rose, Irene Juhasz, Jeff Rudat, Jackson Greenberg (friend of Hans Kibler), Sam Grenning, Alma von Graffenried (requested by David Kiehl)

RECENTLY DIEDElida Burgos (sister of Luz Ortiz), died 4/29/2023)

RECENTLY DIEDEduard Daume (March 1, 1936 - May 10, 2023)
Bereaved wife Nicole, his children Sophie and Christoph
and his grandchildren.
Thomas Wicks (family friend)

Join Maria T. Ramos & Jerusha Ramos
on a Pilgrimage to Israel
with Optional Extension to Greece
 February 19 - 28, 2024



Base Tour Price: \$3,698
Optional Greece Extension: \$1,498
 per person based on double occupancy



\$100 Early Bird Discount with deposit by May 31, 2023 or \$50 Early Bird Discount with deposit by August 31, 2023.

Included in the price:

- Accommodations in superior tourist class hotels
- Breakfast and dinner daily
- Round trip airfare including taxes and fuel surcharges
- Hotel taxes and service charges
- Transfers to and from international airports
- Sightseeing as per itinerary
- Entrance handling at hotels & airports (1 bag per person)
- Services of professional bilingual tour guides
- Transport by private air-conditioned motor coach
- Admission and entrance fees

Not included:

- Meals not mentioned – lunches
- Travel insurance – recommended
- Tipping
- Single Supplement – \$750 (Israel) / \$250 (Greece)

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