



## **From Pastor Craig Bickel**

Fellow Redeemed,

How full is your life? I mean, how busy, chaotic, noisy and activity-filled are your days? Do you have times of peace and quiet? Do you have one-on-one intimate moments when the God who created all things can touch your heart and whisper His love into your life?

Psalm 46:10 is a well-loved Psalm. “Be still and know that I am God.” We have those still moments quietly watching the sunset over Lake Michigan. We have those still moments during quiet moments at a National Youth Gathering with 22,000 brothers and sisters in Christ. We have those still moments taking a break during our favorite hike when we are out of cell coverage. In those moments when our hearts are embraced and overwhelmed by God’s closeness, we are changed. Those moments warm and sustain us, but they are so few. “Be still” - that is not easy in a fluid world where work flows into vacation time. “Be still” - that is not easy when we judge our value by how many likes a post gets, so we keep producing content. “Be still” - that is not easy when noise overwhelms us from the time we wake up to just before we fall asleep. However, when we have the still moments and know that the Lord is God, we are satisfied.

While you are reading this, I am on my sabbatical. Thank you, ILC, for this first-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I will have six weeks to be quiet before the Lord; six weeks to practice and study meditation; six weeks to be away from all the noise. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity.

So what will I be doing on my sabbatical? Some of my meditation moments will be:

1. Two days out in the woods by Newaygo. I will be alone with my Bible and books on meditation. I will unplug and quiet myself to prepare for the next few weeks.
2. Spending eight days at Manressa Catholic Retreat over by Detroit learning the Ignatian Contemplation way. This will be 23 hours a day of silence to dwell in the Gospel narratives—to see, feel and be with our Jesus, noting His touch and experiencing His love.

August and September 2019

Volume 15, Issue 4

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3. Traveling to Hong Kong to practice meditation at Tao Fong Retreat Center. This is a place where a Norwegian Lutheran Pastor carries on the work that started in mainland China before the Cultural Revolution to bring Christ to Buddhist monks. I will have the opportunity to practice their Christfulness techniques and talk with former Buddhists about their new way of being still.

Why am I doing this? First, I love being in God’s presence. For me that often happens when I am quiet and focused on Him, not myself or my busyness. Second, the Old Testament is full of references of being alone with God and meditating on His Word. With the rise of screens and social media, our gifts can easily get out of balance. We can do so much with the gift of technology, but we have to be discerning about when it is mastering our lives. Jesus often went away by Himself to pray, meditate and be silent before His Father in heaven. I need that, too. I need it more than a travel blog fix or the latest Lions news. I need to meet the Creator of the places people travel to and the Lion of the tribe of Judah! I am doing this with the hope that I can help you experience God through peaceful rest in His Word. I hope to be a blessing with a sermon series on meditation and a weekly meditation retreat this fall.

During August and the first couple weeks of September, you may not be able to reach me (I will check my email when I can so I do not have 900 when I return). If you need Pastoral care, reach out to Jillian and Pastor Tyler in the church office at 454-3655. Please pray that I meet God and learn how to “Be still.” God bless you all and thank you.

Quiet before the King,  
Pastor Craig Bickel ✝

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### ***From Pastor Tyler Carter***

Thank you for supporting our youth in sending them to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. The theme of the gathering was Real, Present, God based on Psalm 46. We all learned a lot, and I want to share some of the main points I brought home with me. I pray they convict and encourage you as well.

We have a God who is real in the midst of suffering and frees us to be real with each other about the struggles and joys we experience in life. It is so liberating when you can be real with someone else, when you let down the walls and fake smiles, and you don’t simply reply with, “Life’s good.” Being real with people requires vulnerability which takes courage to expose who you really are. How cool it is to have a God who is real. Jesus felt and expressed emotions just like each of us— from betrayal, to feeling alone, to experiencing the loss of a friend, to laughing with his disciples. God is real. How can you be real?

Being present with others is an art that we are all losing. Our attention for others is always competing with our entranced gaze at our cell phones. Keeping up with our social media feeds, the mind-numbing games, and the impossibility of catching up with our Netflix binging has taken over our time. Fortunately, we have a God who is present with us, a God who does not get distracted but dwells with each of us. He is in the middle of our deepest pains, with us in our secret sins and celebrating in our greatest joys. God is present. How can you be present?

God created the heavens and the earth. He formed man in His image and breathed into him the breath of life. God, the one who holds all authority, who condemns and punishes injustice and evil, who is love and pursues His people, who leaves the 99 in search of the one, this God made you! He loves you, pursues you, offers to be with you to the end of the age. How can you know God better?

We have a Real, Present God! Jesus invites us to be disciples, to worship, follow and obey our Real, Present God. We claim to be disciples who desire to follow God, but we often leave out being real and present. Sometimes we even leave out God. I encourage each of you to be disciples who make disciples. We offer many programs that you can experience and express God's love through, but I argue that programs are only a means within themselves. Discipleship doesn't happen through programs. However programs offer opportunities for relationships. It is through relationships that discipleship happens.

God is calling each of us to have mentors, people who are teaching us to walk in relationship with our Real, Present God. Who are the people in your life that point you to God, who ask the hard questions, who challenge you to pray and listen to what God is revealing to you? We are also called to be mentoring, teaching others to walk in relationship with our Real, Present God. We are not disciples if we are not discipling. We fail to do what Jesus has prepared us and called us to do—"Go and make disciples." If you do not have mentors or you are not mentoring, ask God to reveal who these people are. Jesus tells us that when we seek, we will find. I invite you to participate in Delta (starting September 16 at 7pm every Monday) as we take a deeper look at the importance of being disciples who make disciples. How can you be a disciple that makes disciples? †

He says, "Be still, and know that I am

God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be

exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

<b><u>WORSHIP ATTENDANCE</u></b>	
May 5	355
May 12	374
May 19	417
May 26	247
June 2	293
June 9	404
June 16	291
June 23	341
June 30	277
*****	
<b><u>OFFERING DATA</u></b>	
<i>Weekly total needed to meet</i>	
<i>General Fund budget: \$11,320.00</i>	
<b>May 5</b>	
General Fund:	\$9,904.38
Specials:	706.00
Cornerstone Campaign:	1,208.18
<b>May 12</b>	
General Fund:	\$12,976.35
Specials:	2,086.00
Cornerstone Campaign:	2,727.26
<b>May 19</b>	
General Fund:	\$12,390.35
Specials:	135.00
Cornerstone Campaign:	2,197.26
<b>May 26</b>	
General Fund:	\$10,601.31
Specials:	30.00
Cornerstone Campaign:	667.26
<b>June 2</b>	
General Fund:	\$13,685.90
Specials:	36.64
Cornerstone Campaign:	1,229.98
<b>June 9</b>	
General Fund:	\$9,119.08
Specials:	2,361.16
Cornerstone Campaign:	887.26
<b>June 16</b>	
General Fund:	\$12,089.15
Specials:	1,313.04
Cornerstone Campaign:	2,026.57
<b>June 23</b>	
General Fund:	\$10,331.56
Specials:	207.00
Cornerstone Campaign:	3,686.75
<b>June 30</b>	
General Fund:	\$14,448.04
Specials:	245.80
Cornerstone Campaign:	4,052.19



**UPDATE! - CONSTRUCTION ZONE**

Thanks to your generosity in support of the Cornerstone Campaign, the shingle replacement for the Sanctuary roof is scheduled to begin the first week of September. The project is expected to last four to five weeks depending on the weather. The work will be done during weekdays starting on the west side of the church which will require that Division be closed to through traffic. Access to the south parking lot will still be available during the week. Division traffic en route to Michigan St. will be re-routed to Crescent. On weekends, Division will be open to through traffic and for parking. Upon completion of the west side of the roof (after approximately three weeks), the project will relocate to the east side. The lower level of the east parking lot **will not** be accessible during this time. As more information is made available to us, we will pass it along to you! Thank you for your patience as we work to maintain and preserve God's gift of our sanctuary.

Steve Eyerman (616-340-1137) ☩

**From Jim Harger—Servanthood Leader**

After several months on the job, I'm struck by all the ways our members have found to live out their faith and build up others in the name of Jesus.

- During hard times, we pray for each other and give each other hugs. We bring meals, babysit children, give rides to the doctor, feed pets and mow lawns. We visit folks in their hospital rooms and pray with family members. We offer companionship and Holy Communion to our homebound members.
- When God takes a member home, we mourn with the family at the funeral, pick up relatives at the airport and prepare funeral lunches. We send cards and flowers and honor the loved one with memorial gifts.
- During good times, we celebrate baptisms, confirmations and graduations. Marriage announcements are celebrated, weddings are attended and baby showers are thrown.
- On Sunday mornings, teams of volunteers greet guests and members, making sure they are safe and feel welcome. The talented musicians who inspire us spend hours in rehearsals ahead of time.
- We gather to study the Bible in settings aimed at children and adults, new Christians and old. We organize into small groups to discuss and study how God's Word applies to our lives.
- We fill food baskets at Thanksgiving and stock food pantries. On the last Saturday of every month, we welcome our neighbors for free pancakes and sausages. We offer our guests health screening and access to social services.
- We send teams to spend time with foster kids at St. John's Home. We send teams to Russia to bless kids in orphanages.
- Outside of our church walls, we have members who cuddle babies who need extra care due to their mother's drug dependencies. Members visit prisoners, tutor kids and travel abroad to support gospel ministries in other countries.
- Each one of these activities require effort and take time we might not always want to give. We end up sharing in each other's pain and suffering. Tears are shed, sleep is lost and feelings are hurt.
- But consider what Jesus did for us. Consider the price He paid on the cross. Consider the victory He won over Satan and death.

When we bear each other's burdens, shed tears and help the helpless, we're celebrating the fact that the suffering servant is now our King! ☩



## **FAMILY** NIGHT

Our final Family Night for the summer will be on Wednesday, August 7. Family Nights are for parents and children of all ages. Nursery and VBS are for children birth– 5th grade. High school-aged kids are serving as student-leaders. Dinner and fellowship are included for all who attend from 6:00-8:30pm. †

## **CARNIVAL**

The SECOND ANNUAL FAMILY CARNIVAL will be on Saturday, August 24 from 4:00-6:30pm here at Immanuel! You can count on there being a bounce house, dunk tank, carnival food and games galore for people of all ages! Please invite your friends, neighbors and extended family!

Be on the look-out in your bulletin and emails for more information such as donation needs, volunteer sign-ups as well as the opportunity to put in your top three choices of who you'd like to see in the dunk tank!

Costs will be as follows:  
Dunk Tank—\$5 for 3 throws  
Punchcard for Games—\$5  
Food will vary †

### ***Sunday School News***

Sunday School will begin on **September 8, 2019**. The first Sunday of each month will remain as Serve Sundays. Classes will be broken up like last year as PreK-1st, 2nd-3rd, 4th-5th, middle school (Confirmation) and High School.

The Sunday School leaders for the 2019-2020 school year are:  
PreK-1st—Matt and Andrea Borst  
2nd-3rd—Courtney Bradley  
4th-5th—Andy Blain  
Middle School Confirmation—Pastor Tyler and Jennifer McGraw  
High School—Gary Misner

When you see these people, please thank them in advance for all of the hard work and time they give to share Jesus' love with our youth! †

***This is how we...***

Bria Clark  
Director of Family Ministries

### ***Nursery and Children's Church***

We are in need of assistants/helpers in the nursery and Children's Church. You may have noticed that our "littles" population keeps growing! We could use a few extra hands to help when needed. Please reach out to Bria Clark if interested or for more information! †

### ***Plugged In***

Our youth who attended the National Youth Gathering had a blast! They grew closer together in fellowship and wrestled with many questions and challenging topics regarding faith and where God fits into all of life. We learned that He is Real and Present in all things and that questioning is good! On August 11, our students will share some of their stories from the trip during both services. We can't wait for you to hear what they share!

Our first Plugged-In calendar is still being solidified. The events will be shared with you in a separate letter and email closer to September. †

## Psalm 32

“Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit.

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through all my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.’ And you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them.

You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD’s unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him.”

*“Rejoice in the LORD  
and be glad, you  
righteous; sing, all you  
who are upright in  
heart!”*

## Immanuel Singers

YES, WE HAVE A CHOIR!

IMMANUEL SINGERS is the name and praising God in song is the game.

We are welcoming all singers, high school-age and up. We meet at 7pm each Thursday starting August 29 and sing in the 8:30 service plus some special services (our first sing is September 8). At the first rehearsal, you will receive a calendar for the year so that you can plan. Reading music is nice but not necessary. It is necessary to have a good sense of humor because this group laughs A LOT! All voice parts are in need of singers - tenors are especially sought. Each rehearsal ends with prayer for family, friends and whoever God puts on our hearts. For more information, please call or text Leslie Hess at (231) 580-3965 or email [lesliejhess@frontier.com](mailto:lesliejhess@frontier.com).

Come and sing joyfully! ✚



## Fall Handbells

It’s August, and I pray you are enjoying a wonderful Michigan summer. September is just around the corner though and many ministries start up once again, including the two handbell choirs. The Immanuel Ringers (Adults) will have their first rehearsal on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:00 p.m. The ABC Ringers (Ageless Bell Choir) will come back together again beginning Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-6:00.

It is too soon as I write this to know if there are openings in either group, but situations change and there is always a need for substitute ringers to help out. If you are not currently a part of one of the bell choirs but are interested in talking about it and getting additional information, please reach out to me by phone, email, or by tracking me down on a Sunday morning. I would love to share more about Immanuel’s handbell ministry with you.

My contact information is:

Linda Bartusch (616) 453-6082 [llbartusch7@gmail.com](mailto:llbartusch7@gmail.com) ✚



## ***From Human Needs***

**SCHOOL KITS & UNDIES SUNDAYS:** Please help Grand Rapids public students get ready for school! You can donate these supplies: pencils, pencil boxes, pencil sharpeners, box of crayons, scissors, glue sticks, and erasers. You also can donate underwear for boys and girls (sizes 6-10). Please put your donations in the box in the coat room opposite Immanuel's office by Sunday, **August 25**. Your donations will go to East Leonard Elementary School and to North End Community Ministry's back-to-school program. Thank you! (P.S. Want us to do the shopping for you? Simply write a check to Immanuel Church, and mark it "Back to School.") ✚

## ***Russia Mission Trip—Thank You***

We would like to thank everyone for your generous donation! You have filled the Big Red Suitcase with tons of supplies. We also have some extra money to purchase much needed baby items in country. You are such a blessing to the kids in Russia, and they are very appreciative. We cannot wait to come back and share some stories with you about our trip. Please keep us and those we are serving in your prayers. In His Service! Bria Clark, Jennifer McGraw, Kim and Joel Blount ✚



## ***From WMLHS***

Do you want to help volunteer at WML but don't have the time? There is now an easy way to help YOUR West Michigan Lutheran school through donating an item on their summer wishlist. All items are needed for the upcoming school year so please consider helping out. Go to ([https://www.amazon.com/.../.../ls/3DHYLNG4EVO00/ref=hz\\_ls\\_biz\\_ex](https://www.amazon.com/.../.../ls/3DHYLNG4EVO00/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex)) to see how YOU can help or use the donate link to directly give to WML.

Remember if you shop through amazon smile (<https://smile.amazon.com>) WML will also receive a percentage of your purchase back as a donation. Just make sure West Michigan Lutheran High School Association is your charity of choice. ✚

## ***European River Cruise***

Pastor Frank and Bev Graves would like to invite you to join them on an 11 day river cruise down the Danube River, June 4-15, 2020, aboard the luxurious Emerald Waterways Star-ship. **Airfare** is included from most Midwest cities until May 30. A deposit of \$500/person is needed to secure a reservation. Included are 22 meals, 2 night hotel stay and touring in Prague, 7 night cruise, all gratuities, complimentary wine, beer, and soft drinks for lunch and dinner, all port charges, \$55 in on-board money, and more. You will visit 5 countries. Contact Pastor or Bev (616-929-2267/616-929-3858 respectively) for details – itinerary brochures and registration forms. Cost for a room without a balcony is \$4500; with a balcony is \$5200. Pastor will take care of all the planning. We would like to all read a spiritually oriented book and daily discuss it on the tour. These river cruises fill up quickly so decide to journey with us soon. **COME JOIN US!** ✚

# August 2019 Worship Volunteer Schedule

Week/ Service	Ushers/Hosts	Greeters	Readers	Projectionist	Acolytes/ Children's Church	Sound Tech
<b>Aug. 4 - Holy Communion</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Ted Lausman, Bruce Spletzer, Therese Labenz	Steve & Jan Shelner	Linda Bartusch	Anna Lausman	Tiffany Moyer Sophie McCotter	Steve Labenz
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Bill Takens, Ellen Wolkensperg, Scott & Deb Cheyne					
<b>August 11</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Shawn Roman, Josh Seifferlein, John Pape	Bruce & Doris Inman	Karen McCarty	Alex Keenan	Jack Schaedig	Kristina DeShane
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Josh & Holly Kuck, Paul & Courtney Bradley					
<b>Aug. 18 - Holy Communion</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Mike Bisbee, Tim Haberling	Mike & Jeanne Crall	Evelyn Shoup	Jim Preston	Adrian Vela Tyler Clifford	Tom Hutchinson
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Brian & Andrea Zomberg, Devin Haberling, Maddy Moldenhauer					
<b>August 25</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Tim Ruffini, Dan Markle	Judy Greer Laurie Uecker	Bev Graves	Nathan Spletzer	Joe Korcek	Bob Kulaszewicz
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Gary & Diane DeMaagd					

**Counters For August: Elaine Simpson; Hjordis Jacobsen-Batt; Lorraine Kieda**

**If you are unable to serve on your assigned day, PLEASE FIND A REPLACEMENT and inform the Church Office at 454-3655 or office@immanuelgr.org of any changes.**



# September 2019 Worship Volunteer Schedule

Week/ Service	Ushers/Hosts	Greeters	Readers	Projectionist	Acolytes/ Children's Church	Sound Tech
<b>Sept. 1 - Holy Communion</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Ted Lausman, Bruce Spletzer	Steve & Jan Shelher	Linda Bartusch	Anna Lausman	Tiffany Moyer Sophie McCotter	Bob Kulaszewicz
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Bill Takens, Ellen Wolkensperg, Scott & Deb Cheyne			Steve Eyerman	NONE	TBD
<b>September 8</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Shawn Roman, Josh Seifferlein, John Pape	Bruce & Doris Inman	Karen McCarty	Alex Keenan	Jack Schaedig	Kristina DeShane
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Bob & Alisha Barber			Steve Eyerman	NONE	TBD
<b>Sept. 15 - Holy Communion</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Mike Bisbee, Tim Haberling	Mike & Jeanne Crall	Steve Labenz	Jim Preston	Adrian Vela Tyler Clifford	Tom Hutchinson
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Brian & Andrea Zomberg, Devin Haberling, Maddy Moldenhauer			Joshua Blount	NONE	TBD
<b>September 22</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	Tim Ruffini, Dan Markle	Judy Greer Laurie Uecker	Bev Graves	Nathan Spletzer	Joe Korcek	Bob Kulaszewicz
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Gary & Diane DeMaagd			Grace Clark	NONE	TBD
<b>September 29</b> <i>Traditional</i> 8:30 AM	TBD	Tim & Karen Winkels	Jim Harger	Alex Keenan	Noah Flashaar	Dan Markle
<i>Contemporary</i> 11:00 AM	Paul & Courtney Bradley			Jennifer Welch	NONE	TBD

**Counters For September: Jim Preston; Dennis Hess; Tom Hutchinson**

**If you are unable to serve on your assigned day, PLEASE FIND A REPLACEMENT and inform the Church Office at 454-3655 or office@immanuelgr.org of any changes.**

# August 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 3PM Handbells	2	3
4 8:30/11AM Worship w/ HC 9:45AM Art of Marriage	5 6:30PM Human Needs Mtg.	6 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	7 6:30AM Men's Bible Study 6PM Family Night	8 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 3PM Handbells	9 4:30PM Wedding Rehearsal	10 2PM Wedding
11 8:30/11AM Worship 9:45AM Art of Marriage	12	13 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	14 6:30AM Men's Bible Study	15 6:30AM Women's Bible Study	16	17
18 8:30/11AM Worship w/ HC 9:45AM Art of Marriage	19	20 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	21	22 6:30AM Women's Bible Study	23	24 4PM Family Carnival
25 8:30/11AM Worship 9:45AM MINISTRY FAIR	26 2:30PM Caregivers Mtg. 7PM Lay Ministry Mtg.	27 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	28	29 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 7PM Singers	30	31 8AM Community Breakfast

## *Important Dates*

- Pastor Craig will be on Sabbatical **July 30 through September 11.**
- The final Family Night will take place on Wednesday, August 7.
- The ANNUAL FAMILY CARNIVAL is scheduled for Saturday, August 24!
- The MINISTRY FAIR will be on Sunday, August 25 between the services.

# September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30/11AM Worship w/ HC	2 Labor Day OFFICE CLOSED	3 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	4 6PM Ringers	5 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 7PM Singers	6	7
8 8:30/11AM Worship 9:45AM SUNDAY SCHOOL KICK-OFF/Bible Study	9 10:30AM Bible Study 6:30PM Human Needs Mtg.	10 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice	11 6PM Ringers	12 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 10AM Quilters 7PM Singers	13 Confirmation Camp	14 Confirmation Camp
15 Confirmation Camp 8:30/11AM Worship w/ HC 9:45AM SS/Bible Study 5:30PM ABC Ringers	16 10:30AM Bible Study 7PM Delta	17 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice 6:45PM Discovery	18 6:30AM Men's Bible Study 6PM Ringers	19 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 10AM Quilters 7PM Singers	20	21
22 8:30/11AM Worship 9:45AM SS/Bible Study 5:30PM ABC Ringers	23 10:30AM Bible Study 7PM Delta	24 9:15AM P&P 6:30PM WB Practice 6:45PM Discovery	25 6:30PM Men's Bible Study 6PM Ringers	26 6:30AM Women's Bible Study 10AM Quilters 7PM Singers	27	28 8AM Community Breakfast
29 8:30/11AM Worship 9:45AM SS/Bible Study 5:30PM ABC Ringers	30 10:30AM Bible Study 2:30PM Caregivers Mtg. 7PM Lay Ministry Mtg. 7PM Delta					

## Important Dates

- The roof replacement project will begin the first week of September.
- Sunday School kick-off is on Sunday, September 8!
- The Quilters begin meeting again on Thursday, September 12.
- Confirmation Camp is scheduled for September 13-15.
- DELTA and DISCOVERY CLASSES begin the week of September 16! If you would like to register for either of these classes, contact Jillian in the office.

## Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
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Grand Rapids, MI 49503

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“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, ‘Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?’

Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents (*millions of dollars*) was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. “Be patient with me,” he begged, “and I will pay back everything.” The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii (*a few dollars*). He grabbed him and began to choke him. “Pay back what you owe me!” he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, “Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.” But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

Then the master called the servant in. “You wicked servant,” he said, “I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?” In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”

**Matthew 18:21-35**