

# THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

NOVEMBER 2016

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### The Hardest Thing to Believe

Chad Bird

The hardest thing to believe is not that God has simply *been there* for all eternity, before clocks and pelicans and stars winking from galaxies away.

The hardest thing in theology to believe is not the existence of heaven and hell, or predestination, or how that tiny Jewish boy nursing at Mary's breast is simultaneously feeding the ravens when they cry.

The hardest thing to believe is that you are

--more than a cog in the vast machine of the universe.

--more than a nanosecond blip on the screen of time.

--more than a meaningless sack of blood and flesh and shriveled dreams.

**"All men matter. You matter. I matter. It's the hardest thing in theology to believe."**

G. K. Chesterton

### PICKING UP THE PIECES

A few weeks ago, while I was leading a men's retreat in east Texas, a young man came up to me after I had been speaking. He told me about his time in prison. His years on the street. The untimely death of his father and the violent murder of his mother. What meth had done to his brain, to his life, and to the people around him. He had lost more than many of us will ever possess. He was in recovery now, trying his best to stay clean, and to pick up the pieces of the shattered life around him.

He thanked me for something I'd said. It was unplanned, one of those thoughts that drop into your head from heaven's hand because he knows there's someone listening who desperately needs to hear it.

I'd said this:

**"You matter to God.**

**Every man here matters to him.**

**In fact, you matter so much that God was willing to die to make every one of you his own."**

It was just what this young man needed to hear because it is the hardest thing in life to believe.



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## THE UNSEEN MASKS OF PARENTS ON HALLOWEEN NIGHT

Today happens to be Halloween. This evening my wife and I will sit on our front porch, passing out candy to boys and girls dressed up as Yoda, skeletons, and Batman. Behind them will stand their moms and dads, smiling, reminding their children to say, “Trick or treat,” and “thank you.”

Many of these parents will be wearing masks as well, the kind you can’t buy, but which cost everything.

The mask of happiness, behind which lurks a ballooning desperation to save their dying marriage. The mask of success, which conceals the chasm of emptiness in their souls. The mask of good moms and dads enjoying a night with their children, hiding the frantic busyness of their lives as they check their phones between houses, their bodies present but their minds everywhere but with their children.

They all have one thing in common, with each other and with us: they are trying to justify their existence. Be happy. Be successful. Be better than your coworkers. Look better than the woman your ex-husband married. Make more money than your high school classmates. Do whatever it takes to convince others, and yourself, that you deserve to exist. That your life and achievements are worth something. That you matter.

None of us are immune from the ongoing addiction to justify our existence.

## AN OCEAN OF MEANING IN A DROP OF BLOOD

All the while, hidden in the most unlikely of places, is proof positive that all our own efforts are in vain. We can never do enough, be enough, to prove to ourselves and others that we matter. The proof that we matter is found outside ourselves.

It’s hidden in a man, hanging from a cross, blood dripping from a thousand wounds, opening his mouth to say, “I’m here because you matter.”

You matter so much to God that he would rather die than lose you. You matter so much to Jesus that no suffering was too much, no deprivation too burdensome, no punishment too severe for him to endure to have you as his own.

The cross of the crucified God trumpets forth the truth that you matter. The CEO and the beggar, the homeschooling mom and the stripper, the meth addict and the preacher so sick of his job he gets drunk every Saturday night. All of you matter.

It’s the hardest thing in theology to believe. And it’s the sweetest message in all of creation to believe. Every drop of Christ’s blood contains an ocean of mercy and meaning for you. It declares that the ruler of the universe, the very one who knit you together in your mother’s womb, has singled you out to say, “*You I love. You I die for. You I adopt as my own child. You matter, now and always, because you are everything to me.*”



**November Baptismal Birthdays**

Ralph Neumann—11/01  
 Robert Pritchard—11/01  
 Norma Severn—11/05  
 Erica Egan—11/15  
 Lois Wycoff—11/17  
 James Keith—11/18  
 Timothy Kirby—11/20  
 Michael Cueno—11/26



**November Birthdays**

Charlie Stuart—11/02  
 Michael Snodgrass—11/03  
 Robert Pritchard—11/05  
 Susan Maihack—11/07  
 Timothy Kirby—11/10  
 Jennifer Marquardt—11/10  
 Erika Christiansen—11/15  
 Robert Kost—11/16  
 Timothy Barber—11/17  
 William Berbaum—11/18  
 Judith Keith—11/18  
 Daniel Barber—11/20  
 Jessica Zuba—11/22  
 Julie Kirby—11/23  
 Madeline Nolan—11/28



**November Anniversaries**

Joan & Brian Mehaffey—11/02  
 Karen & Charles Braun—11/06  
 Wendy & Robert Pritchard—11/07

## **A WORD FROM WENDY**

How do you show gratitude and thanks to those around you? What are your traditions? Do you have some fun family traditions that you do over the holidays? Tell us about them. Each day “should” be a day to celebrate life and all of our blessings, not just Thanksgiving Day. Unfortunately, we get caught up in the “busy-ness” of life and sometimes forget to praise and give thanks. I would like to challenge you to make each day a “Day of Thanksgiving”. Simply pray with your family at your evening meal, breakfast too. At the Pritchard House, in addition to praying before our meals, we talk about our day and something good that happened. I know some families also talk about “highs and lows” for the day. Just some simple ideas to keep Jesus at the center and all of us focused on our blessings!

What are you thankful for? Boy, I could write a very long list. At the top of the list is my faith, family, health, friends and most of all, the children and families here at Immanuel/Open Arms. Also for my wonderful staff. It is a great group of ladies that love, nurture and give their all to care for the children in our school. They are amazing! I think this year too, with everything in the news, just to be able to gather with a community of believers to build relationships and learn about Jesus is very special. Many people are not allowed to do that or they are persecuted because of it. I am so grateful we (as a body of Christ) can still worship together.

This month, the children at Open Arms will be learning about Thanksgiving and making many fall projects. We have Operation Christmas Child (due by November 17<sup>th</sup>), Moms Group, our annual Thanksgiving Feast and many other activities to keep us connected with each other. Be sure to join us for these fun activities. They are NOT just for Open Arms families.

This month I would also like to say thank you to the church members that come and help out at Open Arms. Lois Wycoff gives her time and efforts to sit in our front entry way and greet parents and children in the afternoons. I know they appreciate seeing someone at the desk. We also have PRAYER PALS. Thank you to Marion Gerken, Ruth Goebel and Linda Herbert. We need FOUR more PRAYER PALS. Will you prayerfully consider helping us out? Please see Debra Zara for more information. Also THANK YOU to the Open Arms Ministry Board: Jeanene Dueber, Sarah Snodgrass, Joan Mehaffey, Debra Zara, Jenn Marquardt and newest member Karen Braun for helping with policy and support of our child care ministry.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. We will have our Children’s Christmas Program at 9am and our annual Breakfast with Santa from 9am-11am. Please join us for this fun event. If you have cookies or breakfast goodies such as: breads, muffins, etc....that you would like to donate for the event please let me know.

I appreciate your time and am grateful for your service, thank you!

Blessings to all of you for a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Wendy Pritchard *Director of Early Childhood Ministry*

**Kat's Corner** I love fall! The beauty in the leaves is like God's giant coloring book, add in some blue sky and sunshine...brilliant. Then there's the crisp night air to sleep with the blanket pulled up to my chin. The smell of burning leaves reminds me of my childhood along with the memories of jumping in the leave piles. Bon fires to keep warm as well as roast marshmallows. The change of seasons is why I have lived here all my life. How awesome it is to know God created the seasons along with all of creation.

**BIG THANKS** to everyone who volunteered and/or attended our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Oktoberfest. It was a fun day, even though a little wet. We have been blessed with a facility that allowed us to simply move things inside. We raised over \$1000.00. Hats off to Judy Keith for winning the Potato Salad Contest.

**Looking for a simpler way** to give an offering rather than writing a check every week? Maybe **SIMPLY GIVING** is your answer. What is Simply Giving? It's an easier, simpler way to give your regular contributions to our congregation through automatic giving. The program is designed to help you conveniently, consistently and joyfully give financial gifts to our ministry. You can give weekly, semi-monthly or monthly offerings. This free program is provided through Thrivent Financial. For additional information you can go to [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com). There are also sign up forms on the table in the narthex or simply contact me and I will be happy to assist you.

**Are you an Amazon.com shopper?** If so, consider shopping at **smile.amazon.com**. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice as registered with the program, such as Immanuel Lutheran Church or Walcamp. For more information go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). What an easy way to donate. Check it out and consider us as your charity.

**Mission of the Month November** will be for relief efforts in Haiti following the devastation from Hurricane Matthew through Lutheran Church Charities. A donation of \$20.00 feeds a family for a week. The food is distributed through the churches with trusted pastors to get to those who need it most. If you would like to add to our \$200.00 donation, please mark your envelope or check "Hurricane" and we will include it. If you want to give directly to LCC, you can do so at [www.lutheranchurchcharities.org](http://www.lutheranchurchcharities.org).

**2017 BUDGET** is in the works. I, along with the Board of Directors, am busy putting numbers in to place in order to have a complete Budget to present in November. PLEASE watch and listen for upcoming meetings to discuss and approve a budget timely. Your attendance and voice is important to budget approval and planning for 2017. I encourage all of you to be an active part of our faith community.

**September Financial Reports** are completed. Income is down, but expenses are being maintained overall below budget amounts. We are actually slightly ahead of where we predicted to be at this point in 2016. Thank you to all of our faithful givers. We will continue to work diligently to control expenses and be wise stewards for God's mission here on earth.

**November Events** – Come and join us for Immanuel's very own family **Thanksgiving Feast** on November 20<sup>th</sup>. It always is a nice enjoyable meal with lots of great food. For those who love to decorate for Christmas come join us Nov 27<sup>th</sup> after church for the hanging of the greens. Our church is beautiful for Christmas...be part of the process and help...something for everyone to do and help. See Ann's page for more details.

God bless! Kathy A Gerken

## A NOTE FROM ANN

“Now thank we all our God; with hearts and hands and voices.  
Who wondrous things hath done; in Whom this world rejoices.  
Who from our mother’s arms, has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love and still is ours today.”

This long been one of my favorite Thanksgiving hymns. We sang it on birthdays growing up as we remembered God’s gift of each person in our family. I can (almost) get through all three verses from memory. The line that always sticks with me is “countless gifts of love”.

When was the last time you tried to count up God’s gifts of love? I’m sure none of you would assert that God doesn’t give us much but when was the last time you stopped to think about them? It is easy to get caught up in day to day life and miss out on all that we have been given. Think about the child who celebrates his birthday with friends, opening all the gifts rapidly, and when he reaches the end of the pile he looks up to ask, “Where’s the next one?” How often do we fail to appreciate the gifts we are already enjoying?

It takes a minute to slow down and to start absorbing what we already have. Stop right now . . . pause and think. What gifts have already been yours today? What is the weather today? Sunshine? Refreshing rain? How are you feeling? Strong & healthy or are you utilizing the gift of medicine to help you feel better? Look at your body . . . what are you wearing? That is just the tip of the gift iceberg.

It is easy to think about God’s gifts this month because we celebrate Thanksgiving. I would encourage you to make it a daily habit. If you practice saying thanks for specific gifts each day of November, you will get yourself into a habit that will carry on through December and reach into 2017. Find joy each day in rejoicing in the God who blesses you each and every day.

### A Word about Hospital Notifications

Immanuel staff would like to remind all of our members that hospitals no longer alert churches when members have been admitted as patients. Because of the privacy laws that have been enacted, hospitals are no longer free to release the names of current patients. Even if you identify Immanuel Lutheran Church as your home church, we are not given that information. No longer can we make a phone call to area hospitals to receive a list of our members who have been admitted.

If you or a loved one is scheduled for surgery, a hospitalization or time in a nursing facility, please alert us here in the church office (847-724-1034). The alert needs to come from you. If you do not notify us, we have no way of knowing where you are. Thank you for understanding this change that has come with the new laws.

**YOUTH night . . . Dodgeball****Nov. 6**

Just how many versions of dodgeball can you play? Bring a friend and join us as we perfect the skill of dodging the ball. There will be different versions on cards and we'll simply draw a card and start playing. Come discover your favorite set of rules. Youth will meet from 5-7 PM.

**Tuesday Bible Study****Tuesday Afternoon Study at 1:30 PM**

This group meets in the church basement (enter through the **doors on the WEST side**). We will be using the readings for the coming Sunday as the basis for our day's study.

11/1    Sickness or Health?

11/8    Am I Worthy?

11/15   Ready or Not, Here I Come . . . Again!

**Tuesday Evening Women's Study at 7:00 PM**

This group meets in the Youth room (which is at the bottom of the stairs to the left when you enter through the four glass doors of the school.) We will be looking at "Managing Your Moods", a Bible study that gives encouragement as we deal with our moods and emotions.

11/1    Scattered

11/8    Mary, Mary Quite Contrary

11/15   P.M.S.ing

11/22   Mixed-Up Emotions

11/29   Know Thyself!



### Thanksgiving Potluck

**Sunday, Nov. 20**

Bring your favorite dish to share and join us for a Thanksgiving feast after worship. Turkey is provided and the rest of the meal is brought by those attending. There is a sign up in the narthex to let us know what you are bringing. All are welcome – there is always plenty!

If you'd like to roast a turkey, talk to Ann Barber.

### Decorating for Christmas

**Sun., Nov. 27**

Join us after worship for a light lunch and then lend a hand as we put together the Christmas trees and decorate the narthex. There is something for hands of all ages to do. Help us prepare the sanctuary for our Christmas celebration.



### *Light Between Oceans*

**Mon., Nov. 7 at 7:30 PM**

M.L. Stedman's book will be the focus of our **November** discussion. The story centers on a lighthouse keeper and his wife, who have claimed an infant that washed up in a boat at their remote island. The consequences of never notifying the authorities about the baby are felt several years later when they decide to move back to the mainland.



## Operation Christmas Child

### Shoebox Packing Guidelines

**DEADLINE: SUN., Nov. 20**

1. Get a shoebox to pack for a boy OR a girl.
2. Select a quality “Wow” toy such as a doll, soccer ball with pump or stuffed animal.
3. Fill the box with other fun toys, hygiene items, and school supplies.
4. Pray for the child who will receive your gift. Include a personal note and photo.
5. Include \$7 to cover shipping costs OR go online (<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/follow-your-box/>) to give your \$7 donation and print out a special tracking label that will let you know where your shoebox is delivered.
6. Drop your box off at church **NO LATER THAN SUNDAY, NOV. 20.**

Boxes are available at church for you to use.

# November 2016

**Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat**

		<b>1</b> Bible Study 1:30 & 7	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> Youth— Dodgeball 5-7	<b>7</b> Book club 7:30 Confirmation 6 PM	<b>8</b> Bible Study 1:30 & 7	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Messy Church Night 5:30	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> Confirmation Noon	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Bible Study 1:30 & 7	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Quilting 9 am	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> Thanksgiving Potluck—After Worship	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Bible Study 7	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Thanksg iving Ser- vice @ 10 Office and school closed	<b>25</b> Office and school closed	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> Hanging of the greens—After worship	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Bible Study 7	<b>30</b>			

*Please refer to your weekly worship bulletin for any changes or additions to the calendar.*

Immanuel Lutheran Church & Open Arms Christian Child Development Center

1850 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025 Church: 847-724-1034 Open Arms: 847-724-6092 Fax: 847-724-1038 E-mail: [info@immanuelglenview.org](mailto:info@immanuelglenview.org)

Church: [www.immanuelglenview.org](http://www.immanuelglenview.org) Open Arms: [www.openarmsglenview.org](http://www.openarmsglenview.org)

**Every Sunday (except when noted):**

Sunday School 8:45 am / Teen & Adult Bible Study 8:45 am

Parent & Me Class 9:00 am / Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 am

Immanuel Lutheran Church & Open Arms  
Child Development Center

1850 Chestnut Avenue  
Glenview, IL 60025  
847-724-1034  
Fax: 847-724-1038

Email: [info@immanuelglenview.org](mailto:info@immanuelglenview.org)  
Website: [www.immanuelglenview.org](http://www.immanuelglenview.org)

Immanuel's Mission Statement:

We serve the Lord with joy and gladness through loving others as He loved us, by serving others as

IMMANUEL'S STAFF

PASTOR

REV. DAVID BARBER

DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRY

WENDY PRITCHARD

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

ANN BARBER

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

KATHY GERKEN

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

TIM MARQUARDT

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

BETH NEAL

**PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP EVERY SUNDAY.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL (AGES 3-6TH GRADE): 8:45 AM  
YOUTH BIBLE CLASS: 8:45 AM  
ADULT BIBLE CLASS: 8:45 AM  
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION: 10:00 AM

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Monday evenings-6:00 PM—Confirmation Class (Youth Room)

Tuesday afternoons-1:30 PM—Bible Study (Church Basement)

Tuesday evenings-7:00 PM—Women's Bible Study (Youth Room)

Wednesday mornings-9:15 AM—Men's fellowship

**October— Upcoming Events**

Nov. 1 Bible Class: 1:30 and 7:00 PM

Nov. 6 Dodgeball -- Youth: 5-7 PM

Nov. 7 Confirmation: 6 PM

Nov. 7 Book club: 7:30 PM

Nov. 8 Bible Class: 1:30 and 7:00 PM

Nov. 11 Messy Church Night - Spark in the Dark: 5:30-7 PM

Nov. 13 Confirmation: Noon

Nov. 15 Bible Class: 1:30 and 7:00 PM

Nov. 17 Quilting for Lutheran World Relief : 9 AM

Nov. 17 Mom's Group: 7:30 PM

Nov. 20 Thanksgiving Potluck: After worship

Nov. 22 Bible Class: 7:00 PM

**Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Day Service: 10 AM**

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving break: Office and School closed

Nov. 25 Thanksgiving break: Office and School closed

Nov. 27 Hanging of the greens and lunch: After worship

Nov. 29 Bible Class: 7:00 PM