

Welcome to Immanuel Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday in Lent
March 22, 2020 Virtual

630 Adams St, Wausau WI 54403 715-842-3644
Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras - Pastor@immanuelwausau.org
Office email: Info@immanuelwausau.org Website - www.immanuelwausau.org
Like us on Facebook: Immanuel Lutheran Church Wausau
Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
Worship Service at 9:00 am on Sunday and 11:00 am on every first Sunday of the month.

Service of the Word

A Litany for A Time of Unknown Surrounding Coronavirus

Written by the Rev. Florence Li, National Coordinator for Asian Ministries, Intercultural Ministries, American Baptist Home Mission Societies

Leader: O living God, we are disturbed by the spread of coronavirus and the many lives that have been lost and disrupted by it. We are in sorrow and disbelief regarding the lives that are being threatened due to its spread.

People: O living God, we pray for the loved ones of those who have lost their lives. We pray for those who are in recovery. We pray for the medical staffs who tend to them.

Leader: O living God, we acknowledge our lack of understanding of this disease, and the fear of frailty in human life. We lament blaming others for the cause of this disease.

People: O living God, help us to understand the majestic power of your creation. Forgive us if we have wrongly accused others of bringing forth this disease.

Leader: O living God, open our eyes that we may see your glory through the suffering, the healing, the recovery and the renewing.

People: O living God, hold us in truth as we practice loving our neighbors as we love ourselves, rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep.

Unison: O living God, instill in us clean hearts. Guide us as we live through this period of fear, so that we are spreading “faith” instead of spreading this “virus.”

O Merciful God, in a time of unknowingness, fear and lack of knowledge regarding the origins of coronavirus, we come to you with open arms, welcoming people from all other places, acknowledging our human frailty and our need for your healing power.

1st Reading: Isaiah 43

43 But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

³For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Word of God. Word of Life.

2nd Reading: Matthew 28

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Intercessory Prayer in the Midst of the Spread of COVID-19 by The Lutheran World Federation

O God our Healer, show your compassion for the whole human family that is in turmoil and burdened with illness and with fear. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Come to our aid as the coronavirus spreads globally, heal those who are sick, support and protect their families and friends from being infected. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Grant us your spirit of love and self-discipline so that we may come together, working to control and eliminate the coronavirus. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Make us vigilant, attentive, and proactive in the eradication of all diseases, malaria, dengue, HIV & AIDS, and others [may be named out- loud or in silence]... that create suffering and often result in death for many people. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Heal our self-centeredness and indifference that makes us worry only when the virus threatens us, open ways beyond timidity and fear that too easily ignore our neighbor. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Strengthen and encourage those in public health services and in the medical profession: caregivers, nurses, attendants, doctors, all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Inspire, give insight and hope to all researchers focused on developing a vaccine. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Sustain all workers and business owners who suffer loss of livelihood due to shut-downs, quarantines, closed borders, and other restrictions... protect and guard all those who must travel. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Guide the leaders of the nations that they speak the truth, halt the spread of misinformation and act with justice so that all your family may know healing. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Heal our world, heal our bodies, strengthen our hearts and our minds, and in the midst of turmoil, give us hope and peace. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Hold in your gentle embrace all who have died and who will die this day. Comfort their loved ones in their despair. Hear our cry, O God,

Listen to our prayer.

Remember all your family, the entire human race, and all your creation, in your love.

Amen!

Prayer Concerns: Thelma, Esther, Barb Peterson, Pam (Rodney Riese's wife), Kathrine Sylvia, Jezel, Joelle, Ibrahim and Odeh (Rev. Niveen's family), Norm, April Winters, Brianna, Alice, Charissa Helling, Scott Kurth, Phyllis, Mary Knott, Ashley Nickolai, Laura Beckman, David Schwarm, Sara Sopiesczyk, Jeff Groethe, Edie Smith, Joan Bonstead, Ted Sanders. (Contact ILC office to update.)

Olive Oil is Here! The 500 ml bottles are available in the church office for \$15.00. The purchase of this excellent olive oil supports the Palestinian farmers who are part of the cooperative. In addition to using it for your own purposes, it also makes a wonderful gift to give someone!

AmazonSmile! Immanuel Lutheran Church is now listed on AmazonSmile!. When you shop from this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-0848220>, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases. Thank you for supporting Immanuel Lutheran Church.

A Season of Hope. This Lent, we're joining Lutheran World Relief in A Season of Hope to announce to the world the HOPE of Christ. Our conference is going to be collecting nail clippers starting March 1, 2020 through May 10, 2020. Our delegates, Mary and Tom McDonell, will deliver them to the Synod Assembly on May 15, 2020. (attached file optional – remove packaging). If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Niveen.

Worship Services are on Charter Cable Channel 980 5:45 pm Tuesday & 9:15 am Thursday or online: Wausau Area Access Media: waam.viebit.com (Left side, scroll to Immanuel Lutheran.)

Attendance for 3/15/20: 34

Our Sister Church is the Lobatla Parish. Address is: c/o Moruti (Pastor) Rev. G.M. Nkale, P.O. Box 160, Motswedi 2870, Republic of South Africa. Email for Pastor: nkalesto@gmail.com

Pastor Sarras' Pastoral Letter – ILC Coronavirus Policy - 3/18/20

¹The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. ⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. ⁶Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever. Psalm 23.

Our church has been receiving information and guidance from the CDC (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), the Wisconsin Department of Health, the Wisconsin Council of Churches, the ELCA Churchwide Office, Bishop Mansholt, the East Central Synod of Wisconsin, pastoral colleagues and other Central Wisconsin congregations. On Tuesday, March 17, 2020, Governor Tony Evers issued an order prohibiting gatherings of 10 people or more to slow the spread of COVID-19.

In light of all of this, the ILC Executive Committee met on March 17, 2020, and has made what we believe to be a Christian responsible, but challenging, decision **to postpone all congregational worship and all ministry activities through Saturday, April 4, 2020.** This includes all Bible studies, Men's group, Altar guild meetings, Quilting group, Council meetings, etc. The executive committee will meet on March 31, 2020 to re-evaluate the situation.

Even as our in-person ministry activities are postponed for the rest of the month, ILC's ministry continues as we are responding to Christ's calling to care for our neighbors and the vulnerable among us. Our physical separation need not lead to social isolation.

- Pastor Niveen Sarras remains available for pastoral care in person during office hours or through email, or you can reach her for pastoral emergencies at 510-355-4352. Remember that this

number is **only** for an emergency. You are encouraged first to try to call the church at 715-842-3644.

- Pastor Sarras will prepare a video of the services of prayer and reflection to be ready for you to watch on Sunday mornings at 9 am and occasionally throughout the week. You will receive an email with a link to the video. You are also encouraged to check our website and Facebook page for more information.

Website: <http://www.immanuelwausau.org>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ILCWausau>

- Our homebound members will receive a regular weekly bulletin.
- The sanctuary will be open Sunday mornings from 9:00-11:00 am for private prayer and meditation. Pastor Sarras will meet with one person at a time with preserving the practice of social distancing of 6 feet between her and the parishioner. Holy Communion will also be available. For now, intinction is the safest practice. Pastor Sarras will dip the consecrated bread, or host, into the consecrated wine and drop it in the communicant's hand without touching it.
- All are encouraged to continue to support the ministry of Immanuel Lutheran Church by:
 - a) Mailing your offering to the church (630 Adams Street, Wausau, WI 54403). Jackie Loos, Administrative Assistant, will collect the mail, store it securely and counters will deposit offerings in a timely way.
 - b) Giving online at <http://www.immanuelwausau.org/online-giving>. Please contact Jackie if you need assistance with this.
 - c) Dropping your offering at the church office.
- We have placed hand sanitizer stations around the church.
- Please watch WSAW Channel 7 and Channel 9 for closings.
- Stay home if you have influenza/respiratory virus symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, trouble breathing). This will safeguard both you and all those with whom you come in contact. We must take the better part of caution to slow the spread of this pandemic.
- Get your information from trusted resources such as:
 - a) <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - b) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

Finally, hold on to our Lord Jesus Christ's promise, "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Dr. Niveen Sarras