

Pastor's Pondering's

Reverend Sue Strickler



Dear Friends,

Our vacation in Ireland was great - such nice people, beautiful scenery and fascinating history! In this newsletter I was planning to tell you a bit about the remarkable history of Christianity in Ireland. But, before I started, I ran across this article from the Church Vitality Center. It is so pertinent to what has been happening at Immanuel that I want to share it with you now rather than later.

As I read it I was excited and pleased to see many points where in the last year Immanuel has made the shift from the Declining/Dying Church list to the Growing /Living Church list! This is great! Good work! Perhaps the places where Immanuel finds itself in the Declining/Dying church list are nudges of the Holy Spirit that we discern if there is yet more work to be done.

This article is written by church growth expert, Robert D. Schieler and is titled

“Marks of Growing/Living Churches vs. Declining/Dying Churches”

GROWING/LIVING CHURCHES

vs.

DECLINING/DYING CHURCHES

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) Jesus is the basic authority | 1) Congregation is the basic authority |
| 2) Have a vision for their church's future | 2) Have no vision where they are going |
| 3) Have clearly stated mission/strategies | 3) Have no clearly stated mission/strategies |
| 4) Organized according to ministries | 4) Organized according to committees |
| 5) All members do ministry according to their spiritual gifts | 5) Few leaders elected to committees with 2-3 year terms |
| 6) Worship is designed to meet needs of unchurched as well as members | 6) Worship is designed to please members |
| 7) Church seeks to transform the present and future | 7) Church seeks to perpetuate the past |
| 8) Uses the music of the people it tries to reach (since 1970) | 8) Uses the music of the current members (European hymns/classical music) |
| 9) Uses the technology of those it is trying to reach (Sound,light, visuals) | 9) Uses the technology of older members (printing press: hymnals, bulletins) |
| 10) Ministry teams do ministry and make decisions as necessary | 10) Committees meet to set policy |
| 11) Seek new members to enable others to live in the Kingdom of God on earth | 11) Seek new members to pay the bills |
| 12) Church members do "Kingdom work" | 12) Church members do "church work" |
| 13) All members are trained to do evangelism among the unchurched they already know | 13) It is the job of the pastor and Evangelism Committee to bring in new members |
| 14) Seek to develop stewards of God's abundance | 14) Seeks to raise money, preferably from non-members via fundraisers |
| 15) Most are tithers or tithers-in-process | 15) Tithing is never mentioned |
| 16) Pastor trains gifted laity to do pastoral care with him/her | 16) It is the pastor's job to do pastoral care |
| 17) The church building is seen as a tool, servant of all ministries | 17) The church building is seen as an end in itself |
| 18) Seeks to build staff to provide more ministry for more people costs down | 18) Seeks to keep a minimum staff to keep |

Pastor's Pondering's cont.

The leadership at Immanuel (Council, Visioning, Bridge) and so many of you have been diligent in praying, being truly open to the Holy Spirit and having it be the Holy Spirit guiding us to know what God wants Immanuel to do and be (not a bad idea for our lives outside the church as well!). I have been pleasantly surprised at the congregation's growing openness to what God is guiding us to. Amazing blessings have been "falling into our laps"! This will continue to happen as we faithfully continue to listen and follow what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do and be. We will become an ever more joyous and vital church – a growing/living church – truly Christ's church! Indeed, God is still speaking!

We have set out to discern what God wants for Immanuel and, I dare say, that though we didn't set out to be a leader in church vitality, I think we are becoming just that!

May we continue to be open to the abundant blessings God has for Immanuel!

With faith, hope and love,

Pastor Sue

p.s. IMPORTANT For all you busy folks who want to make the most of summer – don't forget your spiritual life/church on Sunday. We have shortened the service to 45 minutes (for the summer) just for you!! See you in church!

Sunday School Picnic



From the Moderator Cindy Robles

On June 19, 2010 we had our first Joint Visioning session with St. Matthew. We began with a pancake breakfast with the help of Marilyn and Jerry Frederick who served up the pancakes. We had 13 members of Immanuel in attendance and 26 members from St. Matthew. During this session we talked about our dreams for Immanuel and St. Matthew as we consider our possible yoking. All groups that were discussing ideas and dreams found that we have so many of the same thoughts on sharing of ministries and programs. It appears that throughout our session there was a mutual understanding that by joining forces we will be so much more successful at serving God and our neighbors and at the same time enriching our own lives.

It is an exciting time to be a member of Immanuel. I can really see the hearts of our members changing and growing

in faith with Jesus Christ. The reaching out to other churches and working in the neighborhood have really been a very rewarding time. I can see the enthusiasm as people leave the sanctuary on Sunday and share in their board meetings. Let's continue to pray the God will lead us in the direction He wants us to go. Looking back at the past six months, it is hard to believe we are the same community. Although we may not be growing in numbers in our own congregation, we are literally reaching out to many others around us and growing as a larger Christian Community in the heart of the downtown neighborhood. Between Immanuel, St. Matthew and Faith Tabernacle we are probably 300 + strong. I think that Jesus would be proud of how we are growing in our faith. Keep on praying and stay the course, we can do this together. It is indeed an exciting time. God Bless.

Welcome Tabernacle of Faith; Apostolic Faith

Welcome to Apostolic Faith Church. They will be sharing our building. This congregation has been meeting in a "storefront" and was exploring other options for space because of the increase in their membership. The Executive Committee has been exploring the possibility of this church sharing our building for a few months. Suddenly, they were told by the owner of their building that they rented the space to someone else beginning July 1st. We are currently renting the building to them for a trial period of three months. We will continue to work on establishing a more permanent arrangement for them to share our building with a lease agreement. This opportunity is one that could be very fruitful for our congregation and the neighborhood. Many of the members of this congregation live in our neighborhood. We have been praying about being able to reach out to our neighbors and it seems that they could be of great help to us. We look forward to many opportunities in sharing of ministries with one another and using our building for what God intended it to be. Their services are at 11:30 a.m. on Sundays and they will be using the building on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for bible studies. Please welcome them and make them feel at home.

Christian Education Board

- Sunday School Picnic was held at Eagle Point Park with the Youth leading the service. The Youth decided to donate the offering to Hillcrest Family Services
- Trash and Treasure Sale is Saturday, October 9th from 8am-12pm
- Silent Auction is Tentatively set for October 31st-November 14th
- Teacher Appreciation tentatively set for Tuesday, August 10th @The Point Restaurant
- Rally Day is Sunday, September 12th

Vacation Bible School

Egypt, Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace was the title of this year's ecumenical Vacation Bible School. The churches sponsoring and leading this ministry were First Congregational UCC where it was held, Immanuel Congregational UCC, St. Luke's UMC, Center Grove UMC, and Rockdale UMC. This year there was a change in time from morning to holding it in the evenings. To help the supper rush, each church provided a meal one evening throughout the week which also provided a wonderful time of fellowship and allowed for VBS to start right at 6:00 without many stragglers during the opening gathering. There were 5 different themes, God gives hope, God gives each person special gifts or abilities, God gives wisdom, God gives forgiveness, and God gives us family. Overarching these five individual themes was the main theme which was, instead of having many gods to worship as the Egyptians did, there is only one true God. The children learned about these themes as well as what life was like in ancient Egypt through skits, stories, attending various Egyptian shops like the Barber and Beauty Shop, Brick Makers Shop, Embalming Shop, Jewelry Maker Shop, The Food Shop, Hieroglyphics, as well as recreation and music. Seven youth from Immanuel participated and plan on singing in worship on July 11th if the music CD arrives in time. The mission for this year's VBS was to buy bricks to build schools in Pakistan; the children raised \$240 for this cause.

Mission Board

Annual Rescue Mission

As a continuation of our community outreach, Immanuel had the honor of serving the noon meal at the Rescue Mission on Sunday, June 27. Eighty-nine meals were served. This outreach effort could not have happened without the generosity of the Women's Fellowship's 12 dozen cupcakes, and your generous cash donations to help defray the cost of the food items for the dinner.

We **"thank you"** and the volunteers who helped in the preparation of the meal and those (including our youth) in serving of the meal. This was a wonderful opportunity for our youth to experience first-hand the meaning of community outreach. **Thank you Faith and Hunter Welbes; Brooke, Karissa and Alexis Furlong.**

"Just4theBoys" Update

The gym is "alive" on Monday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 with the "Just4theBoys" - a local development group of young boys ages 5 – 18 from the downtown community. The goal is to help train and develop young men to be productive members of the Dubuque community. Group leader Larry Jackson, Jr. MSE has expressed appreciation for usage of our facilities which lends well to their needs. Immanuel is also pleased to provide our facility's usage for this development program as part of our community outreach.

In addition to the facility usage, Larry is in need of several items for the group meetings including food items, (e.g. pizza, juice, etc). Immanuel's Women's Fellowship has volunteered to prepare a light lunch once a month. If anyone else or group would like to prepare a light lunch, please contact the Mission Board.

Habitat for Humanity

During the summer months Immanuel as a "covenant congregation" once again will be supporting the local efforts of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat for Humanity is not building a new house this year, but will be focusing their efforts on building a house next year as property becomes more available. This year the focus is on an exterior home-improvement program called **"A Brush with Kindness."** Groups of volunteers will work alongside homeowners in performing necessary repairs for the preservation of existing homes. This program follows the basic requirements for homeowner eligibility – including need, ability to pay and willingness to partner.

Contributions collected during **June, July and August** will support the cost of materials, etc. needed for the necessary repairs. Containers, resembling miniature houses, are located in the entryway of the sanctuary for individuals and families to take home and place their coins and dollars throughout the month for bringing to church the first Sunday of the following month – the collection for June is July 4. The remaining monthly collections will be August 1 and September 5. During last year's three-month appeal \$237.00 was contributed through the miniature house collection as part of the designated envelope offering throughout the year's total of \$498.04, which went toward the completion of the home at 1112 Roosevelt Street for a single mother and five children. Your contributions do make a difference! (P.S. If anyone is interested in volunteering their skills for this exterior home-improvement program, please contact Bob Krayer at 582-5117 or bdkrayer@aol.com).

Diaconate Board

June Attendance

Date	Time	Attendance
June 6, 2010	10:00 a.m.	35 Adults/7 Children
June 13, 2010	10:00 a.m.	30 Adults/14 Children
June 20, 2010	10:00 a.m.	39 Adults
June 27, 2010	10:00 a.m.	37 Adults

Ushers and Greeters

If you are a greeter or usher, please be at the church 20-30 minutes before worship. Please feel free to contact any one of us if you have any questions regarding this list. If you are unable to be here when you are scheduled, please let a Diaconate member know **at least two (2) weeks in advance** so we can get your replacement.

July 11

Greeters: Bob and Donna Belle Kramer

Ushers: Bob and Lynn Rusk

July 18

Greeter: Ruth Kruse

Ushers: Don and Vicki Lenstra

July 25

Greeters: Jerry and Marilyn Frederick

Ushers: Ken and Maureen Harris

A big Thank You to Karen Candee for filling in while Pastor Sue was gone on Vacation.

Congratulations Graduates

Arlene Redfearn received her Masters in Criminal Justice from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa. Arlene is the daughter of Ruth Kruse.

Addison Redfearn graduated from Albany University in Albany, New York with a BA-Magna Cum Laude in Political Science, History, Public Affairs and Policy. Addison is continuing this fall for his Masters at Kings in London, England. He is the grandson of Ruth Kruse.

Kara Porter received her Masters in Computer Science from Dakota State University at Madison, South Dakota. Kara is the granddaughter of Ruth Kruse.

Winifred Redfearn is an 8th grade graduate from Southwestern Grade School in Hazel Green, Wisconsin. Winifred is the granddaughter of Ruth Kruse.

Anthony Robert Mehrl graduated from Lin-Mar High School. Anthony plans to attend the University of Iowa majoring in Business. He is the son of Kim & Gary Mehrl and the grandson of Roger Hedrick.

Women's Fellowship

THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED MAKE OUR JUNE FEST A SUCCESS. THE FINAL FIGURES AREN'T IN YET BUT IT SEEMS THE PROFITS WILL MAKE A GOOD CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHURCH BUDGET.

REMEMBER- THE WOMENS FELLOWSHIP IS AN ACTIVITY FOR ALL WOMEN OF THE CHURCH. WE MEET ON THE FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, EXCEPT IN JANUARY, AT 10:00 A.M. THE BUSINESS MEETING AND PROGRAM ARE FOLLOWED BY LUNCH AND CONVERSATION. LOTS OF BOTH! COME AND JOIN US!!

Treasurer's Tidbits

General Fund Envelope Offerings	Giving Budget	Actual Received	Over/Under Budget
January-May	\$27,458	\$26,636	-\$822
General Fund-Revenue / Expenses	Revenue Received	Actual YTD Expense Paid	Over/Under Budget
January-May	\$36,250	\$29,338	-\$4,633

**THE INFORMER
(USPS 259-580) IS
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MONTH**

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52001**

**Postmaster:
Send address
changes to:**

**The Informer
P.O. Box 1002
Dubuque, Iowa
52004-1002**

**Dates to Remember:
July**

July 21: Joint Visioning Meeting 5:00 p.m. @ St. Matthew
July 26: Board and Council Meetings

Sunday Services and Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

Website: www.immanueluccdbq.org

Phone: 563-582-5168

Pastor: Sue Strickler

Office Hours: Every Tuesday, first two Thursday's of the month, last two Friday's of the month.

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