

# IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Organist: Karen Cain  
February 20, 2022

Pastor: Rev. Dana Schindler  
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

“Extending God’s love with the work of our hands and hearts...”

## GATHERING MUSIC

### WELCOME

We welcome you to worship at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Hamel, IL, where our mission is “Extending God’s love with the work of our hands and hearts...” We are pleased that you are here to worship with us today! No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.

Please leave a comment to let us know you are here. Also note any joys and concerns you may have and feel free to greet each other in Christian love.

For worship today you will need your worship guide.

## PRELUDE

### POINT TO PONDER

“They joined hands. So the world ended. And the next one began.” — Sarah J. Maas

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

**All: Where do we find you, Holy One, and how do we follow?**

One: Find me at your table,

**All: We’ll share your food**

One: Find me in your resources,

**All: We’ll share your riches**

One: Find me in your power,

**All: We’ll share your mercy**

One: Find me in your pain,

**All: We’ll share your forgiveness**

One: Find me in your generosity,

**All: We’ll share all, and expect nothing in return**

One: In community, seek my holiness,

**All: We follow you in love, generosity, joy**

One: In the world, share my desire:

**All: We follow you in justice, mercy, peace for all.<sup>1</sup>**

### \*HYMN

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You”  
Joyful, joyful, we adore you,  
God of glory, God of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before you,  
opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,

# 4 NCH

drive the storms of doubt away;  
 Giver of immortal gladness,  
 fill us with the light of day.

All your works with joy surround you,  
 earth and heaven reflect your rays,  
 Stars and angels sing around you,  
 center of unbroken praise.  
 Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
 flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
 Chanting bird and flowing fountain  
 teach us what our praise should be.

You are giving and forgiving,  
 ever blessing, ever blessed,  
 Well-spring of the joy of living,  
 ocean depth of happy rest!  
 Loving Spirit, Father, Mother,  
 all who love belong to you;  
 Teach us how to love each other,  
 by that love our joy renew.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus  
 which the morning stars began;  
 Boundless love is reigning o'er us,  
 reconciling race and clan.  
 Ever singing, move we forward,  
 faithful in the midst of strife,  
 Joyful music leads us onward  
 in the triumph song of life.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION (responsively)**

One: Holy One, your call is deceptively simple:  
 "Do to others as you would have them do to you"  
 And yet we cling to self-serving ways  
 which separate us from your beloved creation:

You call us to turn our lives around,  
 to risk repentance and learn forgiveness,  
 to work with patience and diligence to prepare the way for your Reign,  
 but we get discouraged and give up too soon.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

One: You call us to be full of joyful confidence  
to create community where all have enough for abundant life,  
but we burden ourselves with anxiety and fear.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

One: You call us to speak out in the presence of injustice,

**All: Holy One, have mercy.<sup>1</sup>**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

God is good, and generous, and loving: Trust in Jesus' promise: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."<sup>1</sup>

### **FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART**

#### The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule says "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Our scripture says it a little differently, but it means the same thing. Treat other people the way you want to be treated. Do you want people to be nice to you? Then be nice to them. Do you want people to listen to what you say? Then listen to what they say. Do you want people to trust you? Then trust them. Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, we make mistakes. What should we do then? What would we want the other person to do if they made a mistake? I would want them to apologize, so if I make a mistake, I should apologize to them. When we treat each other the way we want to be treated, it makes life easier for everyone. It's a lot easier to love people who are trying to do the right thing. And loving each other is what Jesus tells us to do.

PRAYER: Thank you Jesus, for teaching us how to be kind to each other. Help us to do a better job when we make mistakes. Amen.

### **HYMN**

**"Dear God, Embracing Human-kind"**

**# 502 NCH**

**Dear God, embracing human-kind,  
forgive our foolish ways;  
Reclothe us in our rightful mind,  
in purer lives your service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.**

**In simple trust like theirs who heard,  
beside the Syrian sea,  
The gracious calling of your word,**

**let us, like them, be spirit stirred,  
rise up and followers be.**

**O sabbath rest by Galilee!  
O calm of hills above!  
There Jesus met you prayerfully:  
the silence of eternity,  
interpreted by love.**

**Drop your still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease;  
Take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of your peace.**

**Breathe through the pulses of desire  
your coolness and your balm;  
Let sense be numb, let flesh retire;  
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still, small voice of calm.**

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **Genesis 45:3–11, 15**

Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.' And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

### **Luke 6:27–38**

"But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the

cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you. “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

## **SERMON**

### **“A Different Point of View”**

*Rev. Dana Schindler*

*I often refer to the Bible as “the book of inconvenient truth.”*

*While it is a book of stories about the history of our faith and the love of God for all of God’s people, it also contains a lot of things that I, and perhaps you as well, find terribly inconvenient. Things like our gospel reading today.*

*“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you.” Frankly, who wants to do that?*

*There’s a country song called “I Pray for You.” Perhaps you’ve heard it—if not look it up on YouTube. It starts with organ music and a man singing about not being in church for a long time, but he went and listened to scripture, possibly this passage from Luke, urging prayer for those who hurt you. And so the singer says he will pray for the one who has hurt him.*

*He prayed that the brakes would go out on her car as it rolled downhill, that a flowerpot would fall off a windowsill and knock her in the head, like he wants to;*

*That her birthday would come and no one would call; well, you get the idea.*

*This is not at all what our scripture means, but it is often our very human response to being hurt. And friends, we are called to do better.*

*When others hurt us, we need to pray that whatever hurts they hold that compels them to hurt us and others, will be erased from their lives so that they can be better people.*

*Or that we can find a way to understand and forgive.*

*Many people misunderstand the directive to turn the other cheek, give your shirt as well as your cloak, and to walk the extra mile.*

*These were not ever meant to make us believe that it is the right thing to allow others to treat us poorly. In fact, these were methods to shame the person treating us badly.*

*To give your shirt as well as your cloak would cause you to be naked. Being naked was not considered shameful, but causing another to be naked was.*

*Turning the other cheek when slapped meant that the first slap would have been a backhanded one, meant to show the other person they were considered to be of lower social status. If the one struck turned their cheek, the one striking them would have to hit them with an open palm, elevating him to the same social status.*

*A Roman soldier could command a Jew to carry his belongings one mile, but if the Jew carried the belongings a second mile, the soldier could get into trouble. It was not in the best interest of the abusive person to abuse further.*

*I love the story of Joseph. It has gotten me through some tough times. Joseph was definitely gifted by God: he had the gift of interpreting dreams and he was smart. But he was not perfect. His brothers perceived him as a braggart. They also felt their father favored him over them. And so did Joseph, so much so that he rubbed their noses in it. Joseph was something of a jerk.*

*His brothers were tired of it and wound up selling him as a slave to some Egyptians who happened by. They told their father a wild animal had eaten him. I suspect that they had lots of time to regret their behavior over the years. It is hard to live with a lie.*

*Joseph led an interesting life after that, as a slave and then as a prisoner. But his fortune changed when the Pharaoh had dreams and one of the servants told him about Joseph's ability to interpret them.*

*Thanks to Joseph, they were able to store their crops from years of abundance to carry them through years of famine.*

*And then he saw his brothers coming to seek food for their families. Joseph recognized them, but instead of telling them they were horrible for selling him into slavery and telling them to just go starve, he looked at the situation from a different point of view. He remembered his father and the youngest brother who had nothing to do with his being sold. He likely realized he had been something of a jerk to them and rather than see their actions as a betrayal, he saw the whole chain of events and said that he thought everything that had happened had been redeemed. What they had meant for evil, God had used for good. Thanks to the circumstances, Joseph had been placed in the position to help everyone during a bad time.*

*Even though he had every right to hold a grudge, he chose to forgive and love.*

*How about us? I suspect that each of us has experienced bad treatment by someone else. How do we react when it happens to us? Do we hope God smites them or that a flowerpot falls on their head? Or do we pray that God grants them mercy and healing so they can change themselves? Do we work to forgive those who hurt us? Perhaps when it is hardest to do, we can remember that holding that grudge harms us far more than the person we are angry with. Holding that grudge can keep us from healing our*

*hurts and moving on with our lives. Forgiveness is necessary for our peace of mind, whether we believe the other person deserves it or not.*

*Perhaps, if we, like Joseph, can see how God has used the pain in our lives to make us better people, to put us in the place to help ourselves and/or others, love and forgiveness will be easier to achieve.*

*Yes, this is a book of inconvenient truth that we often do not want to hear. But perhaps if we can pray that we will see what is happening through God's eyes, we can see them as a way to transform ourselves to be the people God has created us to be.*

*I pray that God takes the pain in each of our lives and transforms it into something we can use, that the evil others intend will be used for good.*

*Amen.*

### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

Gracious God, source of every blessing, as you sent Joseph into Egypt to save the world from famine, you sent Jesus into our lives to save us from selfishness and greed. For teaching us to treat others as we would have them treat us, we give you our thanks and praise. Help us to be the loving, forgiving people you created us to be. Enable us to seek justice for ourselves and others, to listen to other points of view, and to see each person as the beloved child of God that they are, even when they may not be very lovable. Remind us that we, too, are not always very lovable. And grant each of us the mercy we need.

We offer special prayers this day for those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit. We pray that you will grant them the healing they need. We pray for those who grieve, that they may find your comfort. We pray for those who have unmet needs and for those who live in fear and violence. Lord, help us to see and fulfil the needs we can. And remind us to treat others as we would like to be treated.

We pray for justice for all people, and the energy and willingness to treat all people with justice that we might all live in peace. All these things we pray in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray, saying:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen**

### **SERVICE OF GIVING AND SHARING**

When we give our tithes and offerings, we are witnesses to the transforming love of God in Christ. I invite you to give as generously as you have received.<sup>1</sup>

Offerings may be placed in the offering plates in the Narthex, mailed in to Immanuel United Church of Christ, 5838 Staunton Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025, or by going to our website at iucchamel.org, clicking on the GIVING tab and then clicking on the DONATE button.

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION** – Unison

**Accept these gifts, we humbly pray, O God. Let them give you honor and glory as we serve the needs of your people. And let the called and redeemed of God say, Amen.<sup>1</sup>**

**CLOSING HYMN** “I Know Whom I Have Believed” # 631 (HFoG)

**I know not why God’s wondrous grace  
To me He hath made known,  
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love  
Redeemed me for His own.**

**But “I know whom I have believed,  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I’ve committed  
Unto Him against that day.”**

**I know not how this saving faith  
To me He did impart,  
Nor how believing in His Word  
Wrought peace within my heart.**

**But “I know whom I have believed,  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I’ve committed  
Unto Him against that day.”**

**GOING FORTH TO SERVE** As we go forth to serve, please remember our opportunities this week. Join us for:

**CONFIRMATION** will meet not meet this week.

**PRAYER GROUP** will meet Wednesday at 10 am. Please take time during the week to pray for our church, our members/family/friends, our leaders and our community.

**BOOK STUDY** *On behalf of the church council, I would like to invite all members to attend our 5-6 week study using the book *Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory* by Tod Bolsinger. We have spent a lot of time wishing for things to return to the way they used to be, but the reality is that will simply not happen. Our world has changed and if we want to survive and thrive as a church,*

*we are going to have to change our approach to how we are the church that God is leading us to be in this time and place. We need some new ideas and methods and those can come from anyone. Change is hard but failure to change can be fatal. Call/text/e-mail me to ask any questions you may have and sign up. Once we know who is coming, we will select a time or times that will work.*

**HELP NEEDED FOR LIVESTREAMING AND POWERPOINT** Folks who volunteered to be part of the Livestreaming Team are needed. Dave S. will be happy to set up a time to teach you what you need to know and Mark and Frank will be happy to mentor you through the process. Ruth will be happy to provide training for PowerPoint.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**LENTEN SERVICES** The clergy group pastors are planning to do Wednesday Night Lenten Services. Our theme for the series will be Parables of Jesus. We will make the decision as to whether to do refreshments on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Here is our planned schedule:

- March 2 Ash Wednesday –Come between 4-6 pm for imposition of ashes & blessing @ Immanuel**  
**Short worship service @ St. Paul @ 7 pm**
- March 9 Immanuel @ 7 pm—Offering will be designated for Dubois Center**
- March 16 Troy Friedens @ 7 pm**
- March 23 Grantfork @ 7 pm**
- March 30 Marine @ 7 pm**
- April 6 St. Paul @ 7 pm**
- April 14 Maundy Thursday @ 7 pm (Immanuel)**
- April 15 Good Friday (Stations of the Cross)—St. Paul @ 7 pm**
- April 17 Easter Sunrise @ St. Paul @ 7 am**  
**Easter Service @ Immanuel @ 9 am**  
**Easter Service @ St. Paul @ 10:45 am**

During Lent I will be doing a sermon series on the Sermon on the Mount.

I will do a Lenten Study on Parables of Jesus. Please call/text/e-mail to let me know if you would like to attend so I can get the materials we need.

**March 15 Vision Team meets at 7 pm via Zoom. All are urged to attend.**

**March 19 Day of Discipleship 9 am-noon, via Zoom. Please let me know if you would like to attend.**

**March 20 Chicken Dinner, Carry Out only**

**March 26-27 Confirmation Retreat at Dubois**

**THE BREAD OF LIFE FOOD PANTRY** in Hamel is open on Mondays and Saturdays from 9:00 am till 10:30am. All who need assistance are welcome.

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

Mayonnaise	Syrup	Pancake Mix
Hamburger Helper	Jelly	Mustard
Pasta Sauce	Evaporated Milk	Frosting
Coffee	Shampoo	Dish Detergent
Laundry detergent	Toilet paper	

Also need empty egg cartons and plastic bags

**CONCERNS**

Maria S.	Harry S.	Lillie H.
Kathie R.	Martha K.	Carole G.
Tomiko J.	Sherri R.	Donna
Rose O.	Roger W.	Kathleen L.
Michelle L.	Kristy K.	Dorothy D.
Jane B.	Jake G.	Rich R.
Wayne S.	Stan B.	Terry T.
Pete H.	Julie's Son-in law	Linda
Michelle T.	Allen Family	Karen's Family
Our Church	Our Church Council	Our Community

Hitz Home workers and residents  
 Our country as we deal with pandemic  
 Pastor Dana, as she leads

**E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

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 Barb Bloemker: [treasurer@gomadison.com](mailto:treasurer@gomadison.com)

**BENEDICTION****POSTLUDE**

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