

March Worship Schedule

Sunday mornings – the heart of our life together

9:00 Sunday School

9:00 Nursery Care begins (infants – age 5)

9:15 Choir Practice in the Sanctuary

10:00 Worship for All Ages – Sanctuary

11:00 Refreshments and Fellowship Time – in the Narthex

As we enter the month of March, we also enter the season of Lent. As many of you already know, Lent is a season of penitence, confession, and introspection in preparation for the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our scripture lesson in this year and season come predominantly from Romans, a rather, heavy and theological letter written by Paul, and from the gospel of John. The gospel lessons from John are often very long accounts about Jesus' encounters with significant people like Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman at the well, a man born blind, and Lazarus. There is a wealth of preaching material to be considered.

Sunday, March 1: First Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Genesis 2:15-17 and 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11

With the beginning of the forty-day season of Lent, we begin with the account of Jesus being led into the wilderness for forty days and being tempted three times by the devil. The themes of sin and forgiveness continue in the other scriptures. In Genesis, God puts the man in the garden and warns him not to eat of the tree of knowledge. In the second part of the Genesis reading the man and the woman succumb to temptation, eat the forbidden fruit and suffer the consequences. In the letter to the Romans, Paul compares Adam (sin and death, and the law) to Christ (forgiveness and life, and grace). And finally, in the Psalm, we are offered a song about the joy of forgiveness, which begins with, "Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

Sunday, March 8: Second Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-4a, Psalm 121, Romans 4:1-5 and 13-17, John 3:1-17

In the second week of Lent this year, choices and commitment may be the theme this Sunday. In Genesis, God calls Abram, asking him to leave his home and, with his family, move to a new land. God promises him great blessings, but also involves great risk. In the epistle lesson, Paul considers Abram's response to God's call and the blessings he received in the context of his faith. The gospel passage includes one of the most famous memory verses in the Bible, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." This famous chapter also introduces us to Nicodemus, a curious, lukewarm follower, who visits Jesus for the first time under the cover of darkness. The psalm is a song about the assurance of God's protection. We hear familiar words beginning with, "I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."

Sunday, March 15: Third Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95, Romans 5:1-11, John 4:5-42

Water is central to two of the scripture lessons this week. In the gospel of John, we have another of the long stories. This week it is the lesson about Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman at the well. In the Old Testament lesson from the book of Exodus, God gives to the thirsty and quarreling people of Israel, water in the desert. Our psalm this week, which is a call to worship and obedience, begins, "Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise! And finally, in the epistle lesson from Romans, Paul writes about the results of Jesus' saving acts on our behalf.

Sunday, March 22: Fourth Sunday in Lent

Scripture: I Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41

Sight and seeing as God sees are at the center of this week's lessons. In First Samuel, following God's instructions, and careful not to offend Saul the current king of Israel, Samuel goes to Bethlehem and after reviewing all of Jesse's sons, anoints David as the new king of Israel. The lesson in the gospel is about the man born blind and given sight by Jesus. The story also includes an interrogation and challenge from the Pharisees as they seek to discredit Jesus. Paul, in his letter to the Ephesians, exhorts us, since we once were in darkness, to live as children of the light, and, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," begins the psalm we read today which refers to God as the divine shepherd."

Sunday, March 29: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14, Psalm 130, Romans 8:6-11, John 11:1-45

Resurrection and new life as a result of God's action is the theme this week in the Bible lessons. In the Old Testament lesson, the prophet Ezekiel is shown a valley of dry bones, symbolic of the spiritually dead Israelites, and under God's direction, takes part in their resuscitation. In the New Testament gospel lesson, we read about Mary and Martha's brother Lazarus, who fell ill, died and was buried, and then when Jesus arrived several days later, was brought back to life. Paul compares life in the flesh and life in the Spirit. In the psalm we read about waiting for divine redemption, including the words, "My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning."

Beyond March

April 5: Palm Sunday

April 9: Maundy Thursday

April 12: Easter (Communion Sunday)

April 19: Tentative date for the Blessing of the Seeds

Communion: Please note we are moving the celebration of Communion from the first Sunday of April, April 5, to Easter Sunday on April 12.

Pastor's Message

As a pastor, I often take it for granted that everyone understands the biblical and theological terms I use. However, occasionally, I am reminded this is not an assumption I can make. It's not a problem and I am happy to explain what the words and concepts mean. After all, there are terms many of you use in your careers which are unfamiliar to me. I do not doubt I would often benefit from your teaching. One concept that has been a theme of the scripture lessons in the last month or so has been justice. If you google, "justice," (or look it up in a dictionary if you still have one) you will find something like this:

Justice, noun

1. Just behavior or treatment, with the following synonyms: fairness, justness, fair play, fair-mindedness, equity

In simpler, contemporary, everyday terms we might define justice as getting what one deserves. That is, good behavior is rewarded, and bad behavior is punished. At first, when considering "justice" as is it used in the Bible, one might think an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth as the Biblical definition, but we need to delve deeper. With respect to that verse, the seemingly harsh penalties are better understood as limits on what had been much more severe practices and consequences, and as so are more likely demonstrations of kindness and grace. The biblical definition of justice is much richer and fuller than our contemporary and legal definition of justice we often understand.

One Bible dictionary I often use defines justice as the standard by which the benefits and penalties of living in society are distributed and it appears, at first glance, we seem to agree with our contemporary definitions. However, the challenge here is to make sure what we understand and define as good, is what God and the Bible define as good and right. Paul often says, the way of the flesh and the ways of the Spirit are often opposed, so we need to be sure we understand the difference between earthly and biblical and divine standards.

According to a The Harper Bible Dictionary:

Justice is founded in the being of God, for whom it is a chief attribute. As such, God is the sure defender of the poor and oppressed. This care of God is universal. The Psalms ground it in God's role as the sovereign creator of the universe. The demands of God's justice thus extend beyond the nation of Israel. Since the justice of God is characterized by special regard for the poor and the weak, a corresponding quality is demanded of God's people. When they properly carry out justice, they are agents of the divine will. Paul presents God's justice as a grace flowing into and through the believers to the needy. The demand of God for justice is so central that other responses to God are empty or diminished if they exist without it. Justice is demanded of all the people, but particularly of the political authorities.

Justice is closely related to love and grace rather than being a contrasting principle. It thus provides vindication, deliverance, and creation of community in addition to retribution. Need is the criterion for distributing benefits although the provisions do not exclude ability as a criterion once the priority is met. Thus, the focus is on the oppressed with attention given to specific groups, such as the poor, widows, the fatherless, slaves, resident aliens, wage earners, and those with physical infirmities. Justice is associated with the basic requirements of life in community. Basic needs are basic rights. Thus, what is literally “the justice belonging to the needy” is properly translated the rights of the needy. These rights, found by observing what matters are involved the context of passages mentioning justice, include land, food and clothing, and shelter. While due process is not omitted, the dominating concerns are substantive, material, and benefit oriented. The context for the carrying out of justice is the creation of community and the preservation of the people in it.

Justice is a deliverance, rectifying the gross social inequalities of the disadvantaged. It puts an end to the conditions that produce the injustice. Such redress will not be to the advantage of everyone in the community. The oppressed are raised, the oppressors are judged.

There are many words and concepts in the Bible which have somewhat different meanings than their current meaning. Today we think with our head and love with our heart. In Biblical days it was the opposite. In Isaiah there is a passage where angels cover their feet with one of their sets of wings. In that case, the language is an idiom and they are covering their genitals. Words and concepts can change from time to time and culture to culture. So, as you can see, justice, according to the Bible is somewhat different than our contemporary understanding as well. Proper and just behavior in the Bible has a strong component of care for the oppressed which I believe is lacking from our modern, secular definition of justice.

My apologies for such a long and lengthy definition, but there has been and will be many references to justice in the words of scripture and it is good to understand that it is about caring for all people and creating a just and fair community for all people, especially the folks at the bottom of the social structures.

Peace, Pastor Dale

MISSION COMMITTEE

Do you know who is on your Church's Mission Committee? Do you know what we do? Come meet us on March 15th when we will be hosting a special St. Patty's Day Coffee Time!





GERMAN DINNER

The German Dinner (originally the Oktoberfest Dinner) will be held on Saturday, March 7th at 4:30 to 7pm. The dinner, which was originally planned for October 17, 2019 was postponed until March 7th due to our well problems. Preparations have already begun for the dinner and the next week will be very busy. Won't you please help with bake goods (cakes/pies, etc.) for the dinner. We will need a number of desserts as this dinner is usually well attended and everyone is looking for something sweet! In addition, please come out and enjoy all of the good food and fellowship that evening. Tickets for the original Oktoberfest Dinner had already been printed and some had been sold prior to the postponement. If you have a ticket or tickets for that dinner dated October 17, 2019, they are to be used for the German Dinner in March. If you know of someone who may also have tickets for the original dinner, please let them know that their tickets will be honored.

DORCHESTER COUNTY WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST



This prayer breakfast is a long-standing tradition of women from many different Dorchester churches joining for prayer. We will be hosting the Prayer Breakfast again this year on **Saturday morning, March 21, starting at 8:00am** in our Fellowship Hall.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS RETURNS

Remember to set your clocks forward 1 hour as Daylight Savings Time returns on March 8th.





FAMILY BINGO NIGHT

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY on **Saturday, March 28**, when the doors will open at 5:00 p.m. Games will start at 6:00 p.m. Adults and children 12 and older - \$10.00; children under 12 - \$5.00. Admission includes 6 cards for 20 games for adults and 3 cards for 20 games for children under 12 and a door prize ticket. (Second set of cards \$5.00).

Food will be available for purchase. There will be Tricky Tray Baskets, a 50/50 raffle and door prizes.

This is a Family Bingo time. The Christian Education Board is looking for helpers and donations. We need people to help with set-up, in the kitchen, at the door and for clean-up. Sign-up sheets are located on the table in the Narthex or call the office to have us put your name on the list.

Donations are welcome in many forms such as gift cards for all ages of \$25.00 or less (\$10/\$15). Door prizes are needed. We are asking for \$5.00 gift cards and baked goods (need to fill out ingredients card and attach) for the adults. We will still have fun items for the kids. Also needed are baskets and individual items for the Tricky Tray. No time to shop, no problem, we accept cash too! Please have items in by March 17 at the latest.

It is such a fun family event. This is also a great community outreach for our church. Please help make this another success. Thank you.



CHURCH COUNCIL

The first meeting since election and installation of our Church Council will be on Monday, March 16th at 6:30 pm.

BIBLE STUDY

Our bible study with Donna Campbell will resume in April. Be sure to check the April newsletter for starting date.

EASTER SCHEDULE

Immanuel UCC will host an Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 12. This will begin with a continental breakfast at 8:30am followed by the Easter egg hunt. Come out and enjoy the fun of watching our young people look for the eggs. No Sunday School.

Worship service at 10:00am.

Order flowers for Easter Day today!! Our Easter garden will include:

Easter Flower Order Form

\$6.95 Per Plant

And how many
of each.

Specify Plant:

- () Hyacinths
- () Daffodils
- () Tulips
- () Lily
- () Mums



Please complete the order form below and place in the Secretary's In-Box in the office or in Immanuel's locked mailbox by April 14

(circle one) In Honor / In Loving

of _____

by _____

SUPPORTING EVENTS IN OUR WIDER COMMUNITY



One Great Hour of Sharing

"Sharing brings joy to others." 2 Corinthians 9:7-15

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, United Church of Christ members reach out in the name of Christ to:

- **Build sustainable communities.** OGHS supports self-help programs in more than 80 nations to build sustainable communities that enable people and communities to stand against and rise above hunger, disease, illiteracy, and other forces of injustice that deny and destroy dignity.
- **Respond to disaster.** OGHS provides emergency and long-term assistance to people in the aftermath of hurricanes, tornados, storms, floods, tidal waves, fires, explosions, technological disasters, civil strife, war, or other natural or human-caused events. On average, OGHS responds to a disaster once every 2.5 days.
- **Minister to refugees.** OGHS responds with advocacy and help, hope and hospitality for people who have been uprooted from their home of origin. More than 30 million of the world's people are uprooted at any given time.

In cooperation with Global Ministries, Church World Service, Action by Churches Together, Interchurch Medical Assistance, Foods Resource Bank, Oikocredit, Freedom from Hunger and hundreds of local partners around the world, One Great Hour of Sharing is part of a remarkable network of service and caring that is efficient, effective and faithful. Administrative costs are typically less than eight percent annually.

The United Church of Christ unites with Christians in eight other Protestant denominations and Church World Service in One Great Hour of Sharing, thus multiplying the effectiveness and extent of our witness many times over. The partnership we share with nearly 6,000 United Church of Christ congregations across the United States and Puerto Rico is where this remarkable miracle connecting UCC members to the world truly begins. The UCC annually channels more than \$3 million dollars through One Great Hour of Sharing to humanitarian needs in the world. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, you are part of these networks of relationships all along the way. Together, we are part of God's continuing and amazing work in the world.

Through your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing what we can imagine becomes ever more a reality for more and more people. We will welcome our One Great Hour of Sharing offering on **Sunday, March 22 during our worship service.**

MEMBERS & STAFF MARCH CELEBRATIONS

Member Birthdays

Owen Dodson	3/02
Cora Ann Tomey	3/03
Keith Malkus	3/04
Diane Murphy	3/06
Beth Giese	3/12
Pat Creighton	3/14
Corey Ashton	3/16
Brent Malkus	3/18
Collin Bair	3/19
David Cannon, Jr	3/21
Chuck Hanson	3/23
Christian Schnoor	3/25
Nicholas Barnett	3/27
Don Creighton	3/29
Phil Albert	3/31

Member Anniversary

Julia & C. R. Newman	3/05
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Your Staff

The Rev. Dale Krotee
Janice Haller
J. Curtis White
Lynne Breil & Tina Lyte
Stephanie Carmine

Pastor
Church Secretary
Choir Director/Organist
Pianist
Nursery Care Provider

Your Church Council

Donna Campbell – President

Kate Deckenback
Keith Malkus
Terry Melius
John Dodson

Lynne Browne
Kristina Luthy
Cassie Burton
Robin Burton
Jock Luthy

Church Contact Information

Office Hours - Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Phone: 410-228-4640 FAX: 410-221-6419

E-mail: info@immanuelucc.com;

pastor@immanuelucc.com

IMMAMUEL PRAYER LIST: You are invited to remember these people in prayer

Members of Immanuel:

Norma Lee BURTON, health issues, at home
Shirley BURTON, mother of Robin Burton, health issues
Wells David DODSON, son of Scott & Amy Dodson
Bill FOXWEL L, facing health challenges
Jean FOXWELL, health issues
Evan KOZAK, health issues
Helen MALKUS, health issues, at home
Milton MALKUS, JR., health issues
Elsa SCHNOOR, health issues, at home
Nancy SIMS, health issues, assisted living in Silver Spring, MD
Irene TAYLOR, health issues, at The Pines, Room 303, Easton

Friends of Immanuel Church:

Janet GIORDANO, friend of Janice Haller, at Doey's House Hospice
of Washington County
Lillian LOWENSEN, mother of Diana Krotee, health issues
Jackie RAE, sister-in-law of Don Rae, health issues
Emma Jean SELLERS, grandmother of Kristina & Garrett Luthy,
at Health South

Other Prayer Requests:

Guidance in Immanuel's leaders for 2020 and beyond
Our adopted child, Royer Gaeel Arroyo Sulca, from Peru
Dorchester County Public Schools
Children at the border
Those shot in our country
Those suffering the effects from natural disasters

Members and Friends Serving in Our Armed Forces:

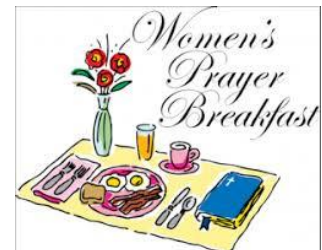
Christopher ANTENEN, U. S. Air Force, now stationed in the USA,
grand-nephew of the late Jean Haddaway
Jake CREIGHTON, U.S. Army, stationed in Georgia
Buddy HAYDEN, friend of Robin Burton, U.S. Air Force
Harley E. JONES, friend of Robin Burton, U. S. Marines
Keagan ROSARIO, U.S. Air Force, friend of Kim Leonard, now
stationed in the U.S.
Matthew L. RUBLE, II, U.S. Army, nephew of Michal Dixon,
stationed at Fort Polk, LA
Jason T. WARDEN, Marines, nephew of Michal Dixon,
stationed in Havelock, North Carolina



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WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST
8am – Saturday, March 21, 2020



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FAMILY BINGO FUN
SATURDAY, March 28, 2020
Doors open 5:00pm;
Bingo begins: 6:00pm
(See inside for more details)