



PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Greetings Saints!

I have been re-reading the Psalms as a part of my recently completed Lenten devotions and, while many of them are favorite pieces of scripture for me, I particularly enjoyed this section of Psalm 106.....

“Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.”

I viewed a famous painting recently by French artist, Jules Breton. I am sure many of you might also have seen this beautiful work entitled *The Song of the Lark*. The painting depicts a peasant girl on her way to the field for a hard day of work. Suddenly, it appears, she has heard the sound of a lark. Breton captures her upturned face, alive with hope and joy, thrilled to hear the lilting beauty of the lark's sweet song. From her dress, she is obviously just another peasant girl with a difficult, workday life. But Breton captures something of her inner soul – a human being glorying in one of nature's loveliest voices, a person enriched by the beauty of God's creation.

Interestingly, the painting has no image of a bird in it. The lark that gives rise to such pleasure is unseen.

And so, it is with God. We cannot see God with our own physical eyes. Nevertheless, we can feel God's presence and hear God's words of comfort, admonition, and encouragement. We do see God moving in the circumstances of our lives. Though unseen, God adds joy, hope, meaning, and purpose to our day-to-day lives.

God is singing a song especially for YOU today. Look up and listen!

Whenever I think about the changing seasons from winter to spring and then summer, I try to think again about seeing God in the unseen. I marvel in the beauty of the green buds appearing on the trees, the small springtime flowers tentatively breaking through the surface of the soil, and then finally the smell of fresh cut grass in my neighborhood.

All these signs remind me that God is always found in the small wonders of the beauty of creation. And I encourage you, in this time of changing seasons, to look again for the face of God in the beauty of the world around you. And remember that God has made all this beauty especially for your enjoyment. Be kind to God's creation and watch as new life springs forth for us all to enjoy!

Pastor Jack Keating

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THIS AND THAT FROM PASTOR JACK.....

Here are some things to think about and maybe even mark your calendar to attend...

1. BLESSING BOXES... During Lent this year we used our BLESSING BOXES and all of the funds given are being directed to support UMCOR's Earthquake Response in Turkey and Syria. As of this writing we have topped \$1,600 and a few boxes are still being turned in! Imagine how much life-saving ministry this will do in this ravaged area of the world. THANKS for all your gifts that will change the lives of others!

2. AMAZING GRACE... Thanks to all who helped make our Lenten and Easter worship so meaningful. Our musicians, ushers, Biblical characters and worship leaders served well here during this season. We are so blessed by you all!

3. Our Disaster Relief Team spent the week of April 17-21, 2023, in Buffalo, helping to repair damage caused by this winter's snowstorms. 7 people attended the trip and will be sharing the stories of their disciple making with us all in the weeks to come. Check out some photos by clicking here: [Buffalo Mission trip](#)

4. You are invited to a special time of discussion about the current situation in our United Methodist Church regarding the issues of human sexuality on Sunday, May 7th immediately following the 10:00am worship service. We can discuss what brought the denomination to this point, what the current realities are and try to answer any questions you might have! We encourage you to come with an open mind and heart for this discussion! Please know this is planned as an "information-only" session. We will NOT be taking any votes or actions at this gathering.



THIS AND THAT FROM PASTOR JACK con't.....

5. Our monthly Service of Healing Prayers and Anointing is in the Fireside Room at 12:00noon on the 2nd Sunday of the month and this is a time of prayer, scripture, short meditation, and individual healing prayers. You should feel free to come with needs for physical, emotional, spiritual healing as well as healing of a relationship or difficult situation in your life. If you perceive such a need in your life... join us for our next service on May 14 th at 12:00noon in the Fireside Room!

6. Don't forget to wear your name tag each Sunday morning! Everyone appreciates hearing their own name and by wearing your name tag you make this much easier. If you need a nametag, please put a note in Pam's mailbox across from the office. Thanks!

7. Our kids are having a great time at KIDZ CLUB every week! Both the kids and Alex are having a great time and the last Sunday for Kidz Club during this school year is on Sunday, June 4th! But there is still time to bring a friend to KIDZ CLUB! Check out our Kidz Club page by clicking here: [Kidz Club](#)

8. Speaking of June 4th We have lots planned for this special day! We will celebrate with our Kidz Club kids, and the choir will be singing for their last Sunday before the summer break. We will also celebrate Dan's ministry as our accompanist that day... as he moves into the new stage of "retirement" for the keyboard. And we will top all that off with a "Welcome Summer" picnic celebration coordinated by our Fellowship team! Be sure to mark this date on your calendar.

9. Beginning on Sunday, June 11th we will move to our summer schedule with one worship service at 9:00am in the Sanctuary! We will resume our fall schedule for worship after Labor Day.

~Pastor Jack





UPCOMING RETIREMENT

On Sunday, June 4th Dan Miller will complete his service to Immanuel as our accompanist. Dan has made the decision to move into retirement and will continue to be deeply involved in our music but now in different ways. We are so thankful for both Dan and Lisa and the music gifts they bring that enhance our worship experience! We have been and will probably continue to be blessed by Dan and the gifts God has given him to make beautiful music.

Our Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) has begun the process of seeking out the next accompanist for our congregation. The job description has been updated and placed on the church's web site and advertising has begun. In the next few weeks candidates will come forward and the SPRC will complete the interviewing process and recommend a new staff member to our Administrative Council.

As we move forward, we solicit your prayers for Dan and Lisa in this time of change and adjustment and for our church's leaders as they discern the perfect candidate God has in mind for our music ministry. If you know of a person interested in joining our music department... please direct them to the church's website at www.churchofthebells.org. Clicking this link [Accompanist Wanted](#) they can find the job description and application information. And we look forward to introducing you all to our new accompanist as soon as we can! Thanks be to God for God's guidance in all of this process!



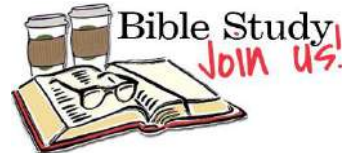
CAMERSHIP SCHOLARSHIPS

Immanuel has had a long history of supporting and helping our young people attend church camp at Camp Casowasco and other camping programs. This has been made possible by gifts from the Eli Whitney Campership Fund, created to honor our founding pastor Rev. Eli Whitney, a strong supporter of camping programs for our young people. Last summer we were able to support 12 of our young people by paying 50% of their camping tuition!

The deadline for submitting campership requests is June 9, 2023, to allow us to get the funds to the camp prior to your kid's arrival for their camping event. All requests should be emailed to Pam in the church office (churchofthebells@gmail.com) and marked CAMERSHIP REQUEST in the subject line. If you have extenuating financial need, please speak to Pastor Jack for information about additional help. Thanks, and we look forward to another great summer of camping for our youth!

Sunday, May 21 is Camp Sunday.

We will welcome Kaylee from Casowasco who will share some camp information and songs during our children's time in worship. Be sure to be here and bring some friends!



Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study meets on Tuesday mornings 10:30-11:30am. During the year 2022, we have been doing a more in-depth study of scriptures with our study guide. Beginning in May, we will start a new book by the same author.

We are a sharing and caring group as well as our scripture discussions. We also offer prayer for those in need. We welcome anyone interested to come join us! ~Linda Nicolini

Peace with Justice Sunday

This special collection of the United Methodist church will be Sunday, June 4. Gifts given this day fund programs that advocate for peace and justice in the US and around the world. These programs empower United Methodists to speak out for removing structures and systems that harm God's children globally. Please give generously.



Thank You Notes

The Mission Team receives many thank you notes from the organizations that are recipients of the congregation's generosity and here are excerpts from a few of them.

Shelley Dawson Smith, Mission Team Chairperson

M2 Thank You Notes:

Bellevue Heights UMC for the Delaware School Weekend Feeding Program (\$450.00)

We were thrilled to receive your very generous contribution. When we asked the children a question about the program, they all agreed that they felt as if their community cares about them.

Solvay Youth Center After School Program (\$200.00)

Thank you for your wonderful gift. We rely on the community so this is greatly appreciated

First UMC Brown Bag Lunch Program (\$200.00)

Thank you for once again this year and for many years of support. Our delivery service will be expanded to include impoverished areas west of the Camillus village. As we experience the joy and gratitude from our neighbors, we explain that we are supported by your church and many other organizations.

Solvay High School (\$750.00)

The students are lucky to have such caring individuals in our community. Your generous donations of clothing and personal care items will be distributed to many of our neediest students. Without your generosity we wouldn't have been able to reach as many students.

Samaritan Center (\$400.00)

I am writing to let you know how much we appreciated your continued support and generous donation.

Brown Memorial Kitchen Upgrade (\$1,000.00)

We appreciate all you do to support our mission programs.

St. Joseph's Church Food Pantry (\$200.00)

It is with generous people like yourselves that we may serve the less fortunate in our community. What you have done will ensure that there will always be help available whenever it is needed in our community.

Heifer International (\$785.00)

The dear people you just helped with your gift may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be - Thank you!

Angel Tree and Mitten Tree Thank You Notes: Hillside Special Santa Program

We deeply appreciate this collaborative opportunity. This year we provided more than 7,000 gifts and toys matching over 3,000 wishes for children and siblings served by Hillside.

PEACE Inc. Big Brothers Big Sisters Program

Nothing put a bigger smile on the faces of these littles than when they received their own wrapped gift that was specifically purchased (by you) and selected by their big brother/big sister. This was an incredible start to the holiday season for these youngsters who generally don't have a lot in their lives to start with. However, because of your kindness and generosity, the gleam in their eyes seemed noticeably brighter on this day and they marched out with their gift in hand.

East Hill Elementary

I want to let you all know how much we appreciate the donation of all the hats, gloves, snow pants and jackets. We always have families that are in need and we have already used some of them.



GARAGE SALE

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE

Dates of the garage sale are:

- Thurs. May 4th 9:00am - 6:00pm
- Fri. May 5th 9:00am - 6:00pm
- Sat. May 6th 9:00am - 12 Noon \$5.00 bag sale

Dates to bring in clean, saleable items:

- Sun. April 30th 9:00am - 4:00pm
- Mon. May 1st 9:00am - 6:00pm
- Tues. May 2nd 9:00am - 6:00pm

- Please do not bring in any items on Wednesday, May 3rd.
- Please do not bring in electronics of ANY kind (i.e. No computers, No TVs, No air conditioners) or exercise bikes, weight benches or Christmas trees or skis.)
- Please ensure that all items are clean and in working order.
- Please have all clothing such as coats, shirts, dresses, etc. pre-hung on hangers. If you don't have hangers, there will be a supply in the Narthex starting on April 16th.

If you have items to be picked up and brought to the church, we will be glad to help you. Please call Shelley Dawson Smith at 315-727-0671 before **April 25th** to schedule pick up.



Many Hands Make LIGHT Work

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

Sign-up sheets will be in the Narthex or ask Shelley Dawson Smith how you can help 315-727-0671.

GARAGE SALE SET UP

Help is needed on Saturday April 29th at 11:00am moving items that have been stored in the garage sale room to the fellowship hall. The members of Immanuel have been very busy cleaning out their closets this past year and these donations have caused the garage sale room to burst at the seams! Any help even for even an hour would be greatly appreciated.

Sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex or just show up.



Buffalo Mission Trip

A team of seven travelled to Buffalo, NY the week of April 17, 2023 to repair damage that was done to the First UMC of Buffalo during the snowstorms last fall. The team was able to replace fallen stucco with new drywall. We are grateful to those that stepped up to go and to everyone who has supported our disaster recovery work whether through M² support, craft show, mini golf support or door sprays or prayers for the team. We are all in this together!

Mike Block is working with Operation Northern Comfort and any interested persons to return to Buffalo the week of June 18-24. See Mike for more information.



Immanuel United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 335
Camillus NY 13031
Electronic Service Requested
Our Mission
*"To make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world."*

We wish to be good stewards of both financial and environmental resources. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email us at churchofthebells@gmail.com and request removal.



Pastor	Pastor Jack Keating
Phone	(315) 487-1171
Email	office@churchofthebells.org
Website	www.churchofthebells.org
Worship	8:30am and 10am In Person or Facebook Live 10am Kidz Club during 10am worship
Office Hours	Monday-Friday, by appointment
Handicapped accessible	

Please join us!