Language Matters: Gender and Church

At least since the publication of the New Revised Standard Version of the bible in 1989, and the past two cycles of hymnals in the ELCA (the so-called green and red books), our Church has given careful attention to how common language reflects the gospel.

For example, in preaching and liturgical language, we no longer exclusively use male pronouns for God or in referring to all humankind. In addition, we try to occasionally use texts that present modern images for God. Before gays and lesbians were allowed to marry we used terms like “committed relationships” and we have tried to define “family” in expansive ways.

In recent years society (and also the church) has been invited to look at our language regarding gender identity. We are learning that the binary of male-female does not apply to all people. You might have noticed many public restrooms are marked in a non-binary way. In Immanuel’s worship folder we alternate stanzas of hymns between “higher voices” and lower voices” as a way to be more inclusive. Instead of the binary “sisters and brothers,” or “men and women,” you will notice that we sometimes now use other terms such as siblings; people of God; body of Christ; friends in Christ; children of God.

If you are new to some of the terms related to gender identity, here is a glossary with some terms worth knowing:

**Birth Sex/Biological Sex.** A specific set of genetic, chemical and anatomical characteristics that we are either born with or that develop as we mature. Types of birth/biological sex include female, male and intersex.

**Cisgender/cis.** Used as an umbrella term to indicate anyone who does identify with the gender they were assigned at birth. (For example: a person assigned male at birth who identifies as a man would be cis.) While “trans” means “across from”, “cis” means “in the same way as.”

**Gender Expression.** The external manifestation of one’s gender identity, usually expressed through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice or body characteristics.

**Intersex.** A term to describe a person born with ambiguous genitalia.
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Children Youth & Families
Together Program
Playgroups Spring Term is April 9 to June 14
Monday & Wednesday 10:15 AM in the Gym ages 0-12 months

Tuesday & Thursday 9:30 AM in the Olin Center ages 16 months to 2 years

Edgewater Tutoring
Mondays 6:30 PM in the Olin Center Children grades 3-12
Last class is May 14th

Godly Play / Sunday School
Sundays at 12:15 PM For children in grades K-6

Confirmation 1st and 3rd
Thursdays Next: May 3 & 10 and June 7 & 14 at 6:30 PM
Ebbeenezer A free dinner is offered at 6PM

Edgewater Congregations
Together (ECT Youth) Grades 6-12 2nd & 4th
Wednesdays 6:15 PM Meal 7:00 PM Program

Adults
Immanuel Choir
Sundays 9:00 AM
Make a joyful noise to the Lord! Rehearsal and singing is weekly through May 27th!

Mission Quilts & Kits
2nd Saturdays 9:30 AM
May 15 & June 9
No experience needed! Wrap someone in love!

Property Committee
2nd Tuesdays 11:45 AM May 8
and June 12 Care for our building and grounds!

Worship Summer Style
Summer-style worship begins on June 3rd and will run until the 2nd week of September.

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Non-Binary. An umbrella term for gender outside the standard male/female binary. Often used as a third category for gender identity, after male and female, and often associated with they/them pronouns. Most non-binary people identify as transgender.

Sexual Orientation. The nature of an individual’s physical, romantic, emotional and/or spiritual attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Trans and gender-variant people may identify with any sexual orientation, and their sexual orientation may or may not change before, during or after gender transition.

Transgender. An umbrella term that describes people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

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Transition. For a trans person, the process of changing from one gender identity to another. This does not always imply a binary, i.e. a person can transition from to a non-binary identity. The process may or may not involve social changes (name, pronouns, etc.), legal changes (legal name, gender markers on ID’s, etc. and/or medical changes (hormones, surgeries, etc.)

Prayer Ministry
David’s Chain
Sometimes we feel alone, we don’t know who to turn to, or sometimes we just want to share our joy with someone else. Find comfort in knowing that others can support you and take your concerns to the Lord in Prayers.

In David’s Chain, we pray for joy, praise and thanksgiving as well as heartache, needs and for all kinds of healing. Let us know what is on your heart to be prayed by others.

Call 773.743.1820 or email a request to be added to David’s Chain.
boumanjm@yahoo.com or churchonelmdale@gmail.com

Saturday Prayer Circle
May 19 and June 16
10:30 AM in the Chapel

Prayer makes us more aware of God’s presence. So many of us would like to incorporate more prayer for others and ourselves into our daily lives. Our schedules often distract us from setting aside time to pray. Others lament about not knowing how to find the words to communicate “properly” with God.

We invite you to develop this part of your spiritual arsenal with others who struggle and persevere through prayer.

Prayer Labyrinth
Anniversaries
Engage the whole body. Each step is a prayer.

Birthdays
5/3 John McDonough II
5/4 Steve Heppner
5/7 George Plessner
5/7 Lorraine Sosoloff
5/8 Leah Johnson
5/14 Richard Anderson
5/16 Sheryl Burkhalter
5/20 Barta Wilson
5/21 Stevens Gustafson
5/31 Karen Makran
6/2 Erin Grable
6/2 Kaleb Miller
6/6 Elizabeth Trist Shahata
6/6 Donna Bartz
6/13 Dina Tannous-Vega
6/22 Earl Heppner
6/25 Charles Carper
6/25 Connie Brink
6/27 Bill Berman

Anniversaries
5/15 Gary and Michelle Knopp
5/31 Mary and Rune Johnson
6/6 Ron and Donna Bartz
6/21 Brian and Loren Savage

Join the Conversation!
Sundays at 12:15 PM

The Forum
May 15: Immanuel’s Mission: Ministry to youth and families
May 20: We have met the enemy, and them is us. How Christianity is destroying America


Join in a lively conversation each week on a variety of topics!
Women of Spirit

We are a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Next Events for Community Building

May 19 - Spring Luncheon Hutch American Kitchen 1477 W. Winnemac at 10am. RSVP Darlene Alberts

July 21 - Architecture River Boat Cruise contact Darlene Alberts for additional info

September 15 - Frank Lloyd Wright Tour contact Dorothy Webster for more info

October - Chicago Humanities Festival

December 11 - Santa Lucia Festival

Mission Quilts and Kits

Wrap someone in love!

Projects for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) No sewing experience necessary! Tasks for everyone!

Quilts, blankets and fabric kits, and kits for school, personal care and baby care. Making love tangible.

2nd Saturday each month
9:30 am in the Olin Center
May 13
June 10

Coping with Chronic Illness

Join us and learn about ways to cope with the challenges of chronic health issues. We will have two knowledgeable presenters and also time for questions, sharing and conversation.

When: Saturday, June 9, 2018
10-11:30am

Where: Immanuel Lutheran Church 1500 W. Elmdale

Presenters include: Dr. Harvey Wolf and Jenni Prokopy, author of Chronic Babe

Lutheran World Relief Donations

Women of Spirit have a new project for Lutheran World Relief. We are collecting school backpacks filled with school supplies!

Items Needed:
70 page spiral notebooks
Rulers with centimeters
Crayolas (2 rows)
Scissors (Metal, Blunt)
New unsharpened #2 pencils
Black or blue ink pens

Drop off supplies at the box in the Church Office or in the Narthex.
Stations of the Values

Throughout the Easter season, we invited the congregation to pray and reflect on Immanuel’s stated values, thinking about questions such as What does this value mean to you? And How is this value evident at Immanuel?

Here are some of the reflections that we have collected so far!

Compassion
“Here at tutoring we welcome everyone and make them feel at home”

Worship
“Youth group has been great since I was in 2nd grade. I like it because you get to be close to God and also get to find friends.”

Courage
“I am really grateful for the experience of discussing difficult things at council and still being able to work together!”

Public
“I like to greet neighbors when I meet them on the sidewalk. Some respond, others don’t but it helps them as much as it helps me.”

Integrity
“In the playgroups, ALL are welcome, no matter your religious beliefs, political beliefs, country of origin. We believe we are ALL God’s people”

Challenge
“Being able to not only learn material but also share it and teach it to other individuals is both a challenge and a privilege.” - Compass/Tutoring

Service
“During VBS, the kids learn about how their faith calls them to serve and care for others. Then they participate in a service projects or advocacy (letter writing).”

Clarity
“Clarity, Courage and Integrity often seem at odds with one another!”

Community
“Tutoring helps me a lot and I don’t get bored half the week.”

Nurture (Playgroup quote)
“This place has been a life saver. I come here when it’s cold and rainy. It’s a warm and inviting place. I can always feel welcome here”

Meet Noah Herren!
We are pleased to announce that ELCA Noah Herren (he/him/his) will be serving at Holy Trinity and Immanuel Lutheran for one year, starting this August.

Noah completed his M.Div. at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. Noah hails from a small town in Alabama and has two sons in their teens.

The opportunity to provide information and ministerial experience for a transgender student is in line with Immanuel’s mission of inclusivity and welcome. Immanuel has a history of mentoring seminary students in past decades.

Holy Trinity Lutheran (on Addison and in the South Loop) proposed to partner with Immanuel. Noah will reside in Immanuel’s bell tower apartment, one day a week of Noah’s time, and six Sundays during the year in which he could preach or help out on Sunday mornings.

Leaders at Immanuel and Holy Trinity are supportive of this plan. I’m proud our church can advance this social justice issue and excited at how the Spirit will inspire us through it. Funding for this internship comes from various sources. The Southeastern Synod of the ELCA and special gifts from Holy Trinity members provide most of the support. Of the costs for this internship, $22,000 is already raised toward the $27,000 goal. An anonymous donor has offered a $2,500 matching gift to help Holy Trinity raise the final $2,500.

If you would like to contribute to the intern fund, you may do so at our giving site: giving.htchicago.org

Alternative fundraising
Mark your calendars and start your spring cleaning for Families Together’s last all school activity of the year!

We will be participating in Edgewater garage sale on Saturday, June 2nd from 9am-1pm. Help FTCNS raise $1,500 to fund professional development, parent workshops and community outreach.

Have children’s items to drop off for the sale? You are welcome to drop off gently used children’s items for the sale in the office starting on May 1st. For larger items, we may be able to arrange a pick-up. Contact Katie Patton at alternativefundraising@ftcns.org for info.