

# IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Organist: Karen Cain

Pastor: Rev. Dana Schindler

February 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent

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

## WELCOME

Welcome to worship today at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Hamel, IL. We are pleased that you have chosen 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Music used is covered under our CCLI livestreaming license # 4012842.

Today for our service, you will need your worship guide.

**CONFIRMATION** 1<sup>st</sup> year students will meet today @ 10:30 am on Zoom.

**BOOK STUDY** Join us on Zoom Thursday @ 7 pm as we continue our discussion on Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 ways to keep yours alive by Thom Rainer. Join us as we consider how to help our church survive and thrive through difficult times. If you haven’t gotten a book yet, you can order through Amazon, either hard cover or Kindle versions. We will be discussing chapters 5 &6.

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

## FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Canned fruits	Coffee	Pancake mix
Syrup	Mustard	Sugar
Flour	Cooking oil	Ramen noodles
Hamburger helper	BBQ sauce	Salad dressing
Cake mix	Chili	Rice
Mashed potatoes mix	Baked beans	Toilet paper

**COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL OUTREACH** We now have a texting system we can use to quickly communicate with the congregation event reminders, cancellations, and other matters. It can also be used in conjunction with our Facebook page and our website. Please sign up by texting “Connect” (without the quotation marks” to 618-268-1394. You will receive a reply and a link to a form to complete. Please add this number to your contact list as the church so you will know who is texting you. After you sign up, watch for Wednesday check in texts. The texts will ask you to select **A** (I’m OK) or **B** (I’m not doing well). If you reply **B** I will call or text to check in on you.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

to learn how to do Facebook livestreaming—see Dave S  
 to be part of the Vision Team—see Joyce or Lynn  
 to help with youth activities—see Barb  
 to help with Faith Quest—see Andrea or Jamie

**NEW E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

Ruth: [officeiucc@gomadison.com](mailto:officeiucc@gomadison.com)  
 Pastor Dana: [pastoriucc@gomadison.com](mailto:pastoriucc@gomadison.com)

**CONCERNS**

Maria S.	Harry S.	Lillie H.
Kathie R	Hope S.	Carole G.
Tomiko J.	Wayne S.	Sherri R.
Rose O.	Roger W.	Kathleen L.
Michelle L.	Kristy K.	Dorothy D.
Jane B.	Mary Ann C.	Jake G.
Diane B.	Students/School Personnel	
Hitz Home workers and residents	Our country as we deal with pandemic	
Our Church Council	Pastor Dana, as she leads	

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**PRELUDE**

*Karen Cain*

**POINT TO PONDER**

“When the people of God abandoned the covenant of love and fidelity, drawn as we are by the appeal of shallow, empty pleasures, God removed every possible obstruction to the covenant by being faithful for us, by becoming like us and subjecting Himself to the very worst within us, loving us all the way to the cross and all the way out of the grave.” — *Rachel Held Evans*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come, let us worship the God of our ancestors who is still in our midst!  
 God is always present with us, listening, protecting, and loving us through every joy and sorrow. Come, let us worship God together this day!

**PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

God of presence, we honor your name. Whether we come in joy or in sorrow, you are there. Whether we come asking or praising, you are there. Honor us once again with your presence and power as we come to praise you this day. Amen.

**OPENING HYMN**

O God, Our Help in Ages Past # 370 (HftFoG) 4 vs

**God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
 our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home;**

**Before the hills in order stood, or earth received its frame,  
from everlasting you are God, to endless years the same.**

**A thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone,  
short as the watch that ends the night before the rising sun.**

**O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,  
still be our guard while troubles last, and our eternal home.**

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

Today we are talking about God making promises again. In this story, God tells Abraham that he and his wife will have a son. Lots of men and women have children, but this promised child is a little different. Both Abraham and Sarah are old—really old. Much older than your grandparents. It was a hard promise for them to believe. Not because they didn't want to have a child—they wanted that more than anything—but because they were so old. They simply didn't believe it was possible. They both laughed because they thought God was teasing them. But God was serious. Both Abraham and Sarah learned that when God makes a promise, God keeps it. And so, Sarah and Abraham had a son. And Abraham and Sarah became the ancestors of nations of people and great kings. This story reminds us that people make promises that they may or may not keep, but God's promises are always kept, and no matter what we can depend on God.

### **PRAYER:**

Thank you, God, for always keeping your promises to us. Help us to keep our promises too. Amen.

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

#### **Psalm 22:23-31**

You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him; stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel! For he did not despise or abhor the affliction of the afflicted; he did not hide his face from me, but heard when I cried to him. From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD; and all the families of the nations shall worship before him. For dominion belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations. To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him. Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim his deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that he has done it.

### **Genesis 17:1-7; 15-16**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will

make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.” Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,

“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you

God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.”

### **SERMON**

*A.K.A (Also Known As)*

*Rev. Dana Schindler*

Last week we talked about God’s covenant with Noah, to never destroy the earth with a flood; a covenant sealed with a rainbow; a covenant that is still in effect, all these generations later.

Today we will talk about God’s covenant with Abram and Sarai. It too, is a promise of God that is still in effect, all these generations later.

In biblical times, having at least one male child was of great importance because only male children could inherit the parent’s wealth. Without a male child, bearing the father’s last name, the family would die out and the land would go to someone else. A woman’s value depended upon having children and her survival depended on having a male child. Even if her husband died first and the boy was young, she would be able to support the family on the inheritance and once the boy hit puberty, he would inherit his father’s property. Then he would take care of his mother and any siblings.

God had promised Abram that he would have a child years before, but it didn’t happen soon enough, so Abram had a male child with a concubine named Hagar. Their son, Ishmael, would inherit his father’s property. Sarai was incredibly sad that she had not had a son but could do nothing about it.

Abram and Sarai had been married for many years and were quite old—Abram was 99 and Sarai was 90 at the time of this covenant. NOW God tells Abram that he will have a son with Sarai. Abram laughed. He did not believe it. And Sarai was certainly long past child-bearing age. She also laughed. Who could believe such a ridiculous thing?

But ridiculous or not, Sarai did have a child, named Isaac, which means “he laughs.”

God has a sense of humor.

God also told Abram and Sarai that he would change their names:  
Abram would now be called Abraham, which means “ancestor of a multitude.”  
Sarai would now be called Sarah, which means “princess.”

God’s covenant was that Abraham would be the ancestor of a multitude, as many as the stars in the sky. His line would include many great people, including kings—especially Jesus.

Abraham was not a famous man in his time, but he was a faithful man. He believed in God, referred to here as El Shaddai, which means “God Almighty,” indicating that there were many known gods, but the God of Abraham was the God over all others. The covenant with Abraham began with where he was and who he was, but made a huge change in Abram, beginning with changing his name and the name of his wife.

God also meets us as we are, where we are, and we too are changed.  
I love the song I Will Change Your Name. Let me tell you the words:

“I will change your name  
You shall no longer be called  
Wounded, outcast, lonely, or afraid.  
I will change your name  
Your new name shall be  
Confidence, joyfulness, overcoming one,  
faithfulness, friend of God,  
One who seeks my face.”  
Do we need a name change?  
What word or words define us?  
Are we wounded, outcast, lonely, afraid?  
How about stuck, unwilling, lost, or defeated?  
Or maybe something else?

What new name would define us as who we want to be?  
How about loving, nurturing, hard-working, growing, changing?  
How about confident, joyful, faithful, overcoming adversity?  
Do we want to be known as friends of God?

With God’s help we can change who we are.  
No matter who we are in this minute,  
No matter where we’ve been or what we’ve done,  
We don’t have to stay.  
God can help us to change.

My prayer for this family of faith is that we will let God change who we are right now to who God is calling us to be. God has promised to be with us forever, to change us to the people we can be. God has promised to meet us where we are and to never leave us the same.

Let's change our name and be the family of faith God calls us to be. Amen.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**God of Covenant, we find ourselves defined by names we don't like. We no longer want to be called lonely, afraid, stuck, wounded, afraid, lost or defeated. We want to be different. We want new life within us and within our family of faith. Help us to be more loving, more willing to take a chance, more open to change. Help us to confront apathy, to find our joy, and to spread hope and joy to our community. Enable us to trust in your love and faithfulness as we embrace one another with the work of our hands and hearts. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.**

**PRAYER RESPONSE**

Change My Heart, O God # 2152 (TFWS)  
**Change my heart oh God**  
**Make it ever true**  
**Change my heart oh God**  
**May I be like You**  
**You are the potter**  
**I am the clay**  
**Mold me and make me**  
**This is what I pray**  
**Change my heart oh God**  
**Make it ever true**  
**Change my heart oh God**  
**May I be like You**

**GIVING OUR GIFTS** God is the source of all good gifts. Through God's providence we have what we need to survive and thrive. Let us remember that our gifts of time, talent, and treasure support the ministries of the church both inside and outside the walls of the church. Gifts may be mailed to Immanuel United Church of Christ at 5838 Staunton Road, Edwardsville, IL 62025. Please help us to meet our financial responsibilities and continue our ministries in this community.

**DOXOLOGY**

God is So Good # 2056 (TFWS)  
**God is so good, God is so good,**  
**God is so good, he's so good to me.**

**I praise God's name, I praise God's name,  
I praise God's name, he's so good to me.**

### **PASTORAL PRAYER**

Loving God, we give thanks today for your many blessings. You fill our needs better than we could ever expect or anticipate. We are grateful that you keep your promises, even when we fail to keep our own. We give thanks for life and breath, for food and shelter, for family and friends, for work and leisure. But in the midst of thanksgiving, we see those around us who have needs. We pray for those we know, asking that you will provide what they need and enable us to help as well. We pray especially for Maria, Harry, Lillie, Kathie, Hope, Carole, Tomiko, Wayne, Sherri, Rose, Roger, Kathleen, Michelle, Kristy, Dorothy, Jane, Mary Ann, Jake, and Diane. We pray for those dealing with the problems of pandemic in our country, especially students and school personnel and parents, essential workers, first responders and health care workers. Give them the strength they need to work through the problems they face. We pray for our church leaders as they seek to improve the health of our congregation. Open the eyes and ears and heart of each leader and member as we work together to ensure that Your Church survives and thrives through these difficult times. We pray for the leaders of our country. May they do what is right in your eyes and may each of us do our part to help our country weather the deep divisions we suffer. 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 by 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, the power, the glory forever Amen.**

### **HYMN**

How Can I Say Thank

# 14 (NCH)

**How Can I Say Thanks For The Things You Have Done For Me  
Things So Undeserved, Yet You Give To Prove Your Love For Me?  
The Voices Of A Million Angels Could Not Express My Gratitude –  
All That I Am And Ever Hope To Be I Owe It All To Thee.**

**To God Be The Glory, To God Be The Glory,  
To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done.  
With His Blood He Has Saved Me; With His Power He Has Raised Me;  
To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done.**

**Just Let Me Live My Life; Let It Be Pleasing, Lord, To Thee.  
And Should I Gain Any Praise, Let It Go To Calvary.**

**With His Blood He Has Saved Me; With His Power He Has Raised Me;  
To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done.**

**To God Be The Glory, To God Be The Glory,  
To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done.  
With His Blood He Has Saved Me; With His Power He Has Raised Me;  
To God Be The Glory For The Things He Has Done.**

## **BENEDICTION**

And now, until we meet again, may each one be held safely  
in the palm of God's hand.

## **POSTLUDE**

