Dear Friends,

When the religious authorities in Jerusalem colluded with the Roman governor to have Jesus put to death, they all thought that a source of trouble and irritation was behind them. They believed that, once dead and buried, Jesus wouldn’t be raising concerns over the treatment of the poor and marginalized as an essential matter of Jewish faith any longer. They imagined no one would question the morality of a temple system, operating hand-in-hand with the Roman occupation government, which allowed the Judean elites to amass great wealth and property holdings, while burying the poor in debt and removing them from their land, creating an underclass of cheap day labor.

What they didn’t count on, what they never could have anticipated, was God raising Jesus from the dead to resume his work of rebuilding the human family on a foundation of compassion and forgiveness. Now entirely beyond death and embodied within a community, Jesus lives to heal not only wounded spirits, but relationships and communities. Jesus is alive to continue God’s work to bring peace, reconciliation and hope to all. The Church exists to be both a witness to and a vehicle for this ongoing effort of God to bring new life to this troubled creation.

Of course, through its long history, the Church has also gone through times when it has been confused about its identity and sidetracked from its calling. There have been those who have hijacked the Christian message to serve their own secular interests, just as the temple authorities twisted the faith of Israel to enrich themselves. The Church has served as a cheerleader for empires and legitimizer of cultural values, prejudices and aspirations. It has proclaimed that God is only interested in saving souls, not human bodies and communities. There have been Church leaders who have made themselves rich and powerful, usually at the expense of ordinary believers.

But Jesus is still alive to continue his work to mend the human family. In every generation, the Spirit of God moves people to be agents of Jesus’ compassion and forgiveness. The risen Jesus continues to trouble and irritate those who would be content with serving only their own concerns. And Jesus won’t stop until humanity has been reshaped and renewed, top to bottom, so that the quality of our life together reflects Jesus’ values of healing, inclusion, generosity, peace and reconciliation—until our life together looks like the Reign of God.

The message we celebrate this Easter season reminds us that because Jesus is alive, his saving, life-giving work goes on and we are part of it.

Wishing you a blessed Easter season,

Pastor Aaron
HOMELESS IN PORTLAND
Forum Speaker Series
Sunday mornings, 9:45-10:45 in the Library
April 28: Guest speaker Andrew Brown of Metro HomeShare

Throughout Lent we were blessed with multiple speakers on various aspects of homelessness and housing. We’ve gathered information and impressions on causes, needs, and responses. Join us in May to wrap up this series and plot our next steps! Every Sunday at 9:45 in the Library. —Pastor Melinda

Greetings from Rev. Philbert Kalisa

We received this letter after Rev. Kalisa visited our congregation on March 31. To learn more, visit www.africanroad.org.

Dear Pastor Melinda,

I am now writing to you to thank you ever so much for your kindness and generosity for the invitation to come to the First Immanuel Lutheran Church. I was well welcomed and I felt like being in my own church back to Rwanda. You have a wonderful congregation and they did more than I expected, they sang me a birthday song, they gave me flowers and made me really feel at home.

The work of REACH requires a lot of prayer support as we are doing God’s mission of reconciliation. Over the last two decades we have been working with perpetrators and survivors of the 1994 genocide that claimed over one million people in one hundred days and the aftermath was huge. I would like you to continue to pray for us for the provision of the ministry. Thank you and God bless you for your kindness and I will pray for your ministry too.

A Request from Camp Lutherwood in Cheshire, Oregon

From Executive Director Andrea Scofield: On the evening of Friday, April 12, the Lodge at Camp Lutherwood Oregon burned to the ground. Thankfully, no one was hurt in the fire. We are so grateful for the quick response of emergency personnel and our neighbors. We are now working with our architects to redesign a new Lodge and retreat center. At the same time, in the next few weeks, we will begin to construct a temporary space that will allow us to operate over the next year with limited interruptions to our guests and programs. A generous donor has offered to match every gift made in the next 30 days up to $100,000 to help us recover from this fire and restore operations. Any gift you send now will make a difference and help us meet this matching challenge. To learn more or donate online: www.lutherwoodoregon.org.

“That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright”

This beautiful hymn (ELW 384) celebrates Christ’s triumph over death and the promise of salvation to anyone who believes in Him.

The music is a European tune adapted by Michael Praetorius, who was born around 1571 in what is now the German state of Thuringia. His family name was some variation of Schultz. The son of a Lutheran pastor, he became a composer, organist and music theorist, noted for developing musical forms based on Protestant hymns, some of which reflect efforts to improve the relationship between Catholics and Protestants. Praetorius served as organist at the Marienkirche in Frankfurt, Germany and as musician and organist for various royal courts. He died in Wolfenbüttel, Germany around 1621 and is entombed in a vault beneath the organ of the Wolfenbüttel Marienkirche.

The text is from a 5th century Latin hymn, translated into English by John Mason Neale in the 1800s. Neale was best known as a translator, but he also wrote hymns. He was ordained in the Anglican Church in 1842. Neale cofounded the Society of St. Margaret, a women’s order dedicated to nursing. He also helped found a society which advocated for more ritual and religious decorations in churches. Neale was suspected of being an agent of the Vatican and trying to destroy Anglicanism. He was attacked by an angry crowd at a funeral for one of the Sisters of the Society of St. Margaret. Occasionally, crowds threatened to stone him or burn his house!

John Mason Neale is commemorated by the ELCA on July 1 for his translation work, along with another translator, Catherine Winkworth. We will sing “That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright” on May 5, the Third Sunday of Easter.

—Risë Johnson, Worship & Music Committee

Check out our new chart for Coffee Hour!

Sign up to: 1) bring goodies, 2) serve goodies, or 3) both

Everyone loves a snack and some friendly conversation after worship on Sunday. Now there’s a new way to keep the friendship flowing. Some people love to bake but are not able to serve in the kitchen due to worship responsibilities. Others enjoy being kitchen helpers but do not wish to bake or shop. The new chart makes room for both and all. Special thanks to Leslie Wong and Bonny Groshong for inventing this handy new tool! Take a look next time you’re in Fellowship Hall—and don’t forget to add your name.
**Bunco Party! Sunday, April 28, 4 to 7 p.m.**

at Tammy & Tom VanDeGrift’s home in North Portland

The Congregational Life Committee invites you to a fun afternoon of bunco, a dice game. Get to know your church friends with a fun, easy-to-learn-and-play game. No bunco experience is necessary. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share with the group. We may give prizes for best food! So we can plan the game rounds, please RSVP to Tammy (tammy.vandegrift@gmail.com) with the player(s) in your party. Childcare will be provided on-site. Please let Tammy know if you need childcare when you RSVP. There is plenty of street parking on Monteith Avenue and Princeton, adjacent to Astor School.

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**FILC BOOK GROUP**

Sunday, May 5, 6:30 p.m. at the home of Tyrell Servo & Don Suhr (Milwaukie)

Join us for stimulating conversation and great dessert. RSVP, directions: tyrell.servo@gmail.com, 971-563-2731.

May Selection: *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (also chosen for Portland’s 2019 Everybody Reads—check your library for print or audio versions)

Ifemelu leaves her childhood sweetheart and a troubled Nigeria to attend university in the United States. Despite her success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black in America, and finds a blog born of her unique perspective. Navigating the tensions of culture and race, Ifemelu becomes homesick for Nigeria and her first love, Obinze. *Americanah* offers a frank assessment of how our societies both strengthen and fail us as we search for meaning.

About the author: A Nigerian-born artist whose influence spans continents and genres, Adichie has received acclaim as an author, poet, playwright and speaker. She received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and her work has been awarded the O. Henry Prize, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and the PEN Pinter Prize, among many other distinctions. Two humorous and insightful TED talks provide an excellent intro to Adichie’s work: “The Danger of A Single Story” on learning about those who are different from us, and “We Should All Be Feminists” which forms the basis for her essay of the same title.

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**First Immanuel Leadership Retreat**

Saturday, May 4, 8:30 AM—12:30 PM

Breakfast, Snacks, Childcare—all FREE!

All you need to bring: Yourself, Your faith, Your love for FILC, and Your hopeful imagination

at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 3880 SE Brooklyn St., SE Portland (*Just north of SE Cesar Chavez Blvd. & Powell Blvd. Easy to find and plentiful parking.*)

To save your spot, RSVP to church: 503-226-3659, office@firstimmanuelluth.org

Join the Council for an energetic morning of planning and visioning. Much has changed since our last planning retreat—but what doesn’t change is our call to make Christ known through faith, love, service and justice. We invite your insight:

- Center in scripture
- Take stock—what’s new for First Immanuel?
- Creatively identify FILC’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges
- Choose areas to focus energy in the coming year
- Kick off a season of listening with community partners —Your FILC Congregation Council

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**Neighborhood Night Out at the Lucky Lab**

Friday, May 17

Enjoy a relaxing outing with First Immanuel friends on Friday, May 17. All ages are invited. The group will meet at 6:30 p.m. at the Lucky Lab Brewpub, 1945 NW Quimby Street. Childcare will be arranged at First Immanuel beginning at 6:00 p.m.—please RSVP to Linnea Zahradnik by May 12 if you will need childcare, so we can formalize plans (lnzahradnik@gmail.com).

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**INTERESTED IN JOINING FIRST IMMANUEL CONGREGATION?**

**New Members Sunday, May 19**

We become members of God’s church through receiving Baptism or affirming our Baptism—saying “yes” to the God who loves us unconditionally and claims us as God’s children. In joining a congregation, we publicly affirm our Christian faith and declare this community to be our spiritual home. We will receive new members during worship on Sunday, May 19. If you’d like to be part of this group of new members, please speak with Pastor Melinda (pastormelinda@firstimmanuelluth.org, 503/226-3659). We welcome you!
6th Reigning Roses Walk for Rose Haven

Sunday, May 12, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Meet at Castaway Portland, 1900 NW 18th Avenue

5K Walk through Portland’s NW neighborhood—featuring live music, brunch, mimosas, sponsored stops, raffle, giveaways, after party and food trucks! Register and contribute at makeitreign.org. Help Rose Haven reach $200,000 by Mother’s Day!

MAY FOOD DRIVE: Food & funds for Lift Urban Portland Pantry

It’s time to fill the food barrel! All month we’re collecting food items for Lift Urban Portland pantry and food box program. Did you know that 30% of food boxes are customized to meet the dietary restrictions of residents? Often these items are scarce. Why not take this list of most wanted items with you to the grocery store: low sodium foods (Soups, canned veggies, prepared foods—under 140 mg sodium); low/no sugar added foods (canned fruit, breakfast items, snacks); gluten-free foods (pasta, breakfast items, snacks); nut butters; canned tuna or meat; canned or dried beans; rice and grains; cans or cartons of soup; breakfast items. If you’d prefer to give cash, please know that partnerships with organizations like Oregon Food Bank make it possible to purchase food at very low cost. Your $5 donation can purchase 15 meals! You can put a check in the FILC offering plate (clearly marked for Lift Urban Portland) or donate online at www.lifturbanportland.org. Thank you!

2019 Endowment Grants

Our Endowment Committee will award $12,600 in grants this fall to fund your ideas for serving God and our neighbors: $8,000 from the FILC Endowment Fund, designated for Evangelism Outreach, Social Ministry Outreach, and Building Improvements; and $4,600 from the Doris Palmblad World Missions Endowment Fund, designated for ministry and service activities outside the United States.

We invite members and ministry groups to actively pray, plan, and talk together about creative and faithful ways to use these funds. One-page grant applications and instructions are available in the church office and on the FILC website. Applications must be presented to a First Immanuel sponsoring committee by September 1 to be considered. The grants, ranging in size, will be awarded in November. Please speak with a committee member to learn more.

—Your Endowment Committee: Pastor Aaron Couch, Emily Traetow, Bobbi Varnes, Judy Wick, Chris Wiens

Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone but in every leaf of springtime.

—Martin Luther

Our Easter faith can be expressed in free and fearless sharing of ourselves, our time, and our possessions. Every gift is a testimony to hope and resurrection. Thank God, and thank you!

“Solution Salon” conversation with Portland Homeless Family Solutions

Tuesday, May 21, 12-1:15 p.m. at 1st Unitarian Church, 1226 SW Salmon St.

Free and open to the public, this session explores the questions: Why do we have homelessness in America? What happens to someone when they experience homelessness? How can we solve this crisis? Sponsored by the awesome group that runs our local emergency family shelter. To reserve your place, contact Emma Hoyle, Development Director (emma@pdxhfs.org, 503-504-5902).

APRIL COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

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<tr>
<th>Actual pledge giving:</th>
<th>Budgeted pledge giving:</th>
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<tr>
<td>March: $18,375</td>
<td>March: $23,203</td>
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<td>2019 TOTAL: $58,031</td>
<td>2019 TOTAL: $69,609</td>
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Council opened the meeting with a discussion of Philippians 2:5-11. Council received reports from the Endowment, Property, and Worship & Music Committees. Plans for the upcoming May 4th leadership retreat were discussed. The Property Committee gave updates on receiving bids for various improvement projects including: Sodergren Hall roof repair, water leakage issues, sidewalk repair, and updates to the organ. Council approved funds for fixes to the Sodergren heating/cooling system.

—Dan Dietz, Secretary

FIRST IMMANUEL CORE VALUES

Spiritual Life ✴ Friendly Community ✴
Acceptance & Diversity ✴ Tradition & Heritage ✴
Music & Worship ✴ Growing in Faith ✴
Family Focus ✴ Serving & Volunteering
What a Year It’s Been in Sunday School!

We’ve been having a wonderful year in Sunday School, but the end is in sight! Our last Sunday will be May 19. We made Play-Doh® representations of the Parable of the Soils. We pantomimed the Sermon on the Mount. We played an Epiphany board game to find the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. We played card games to learn about Lent…and much, much more. What a year it’s been!

In May, we’ll begin at 9:45 a.m. in the Assembly Room to sing and make music with Ralph Nelson—all our kids are learning to play hand chimes, and 3rd graders and up are starting to learn the recorder. Then we’ll move to our classrooms to learn about the amazing love of God in Jesus. The Pre-K—Kindergarten class meets in the Blue Room, with teachers Emily Traetow and Nancy Matthias. The Elementary class (1st—5th grade) meets in the Green Room with Pastor Aaron as teacher. Nursery care for young children is available with Kim Verser.

Upcoming High School Youth Activities

High school youth from First Immanuel and Spirit of Grace Church are joining up this year for fun, food, fellowship, and more. Our final gathering this Spring will be Thursday evening, May 9, to attend a concert by Ezra Furman at the Aladdin Theater. Tickets are $15. For more information, talk with Pastor Aaron.

Vacation Bible School, June 17-20!

Mark your calendar! First Immanuel is planning for Vacation Bible School, Monday, June 17 through Thursday, June 20. We’ll gather each evening in Fellowship Hall, beginning with dinner at 6 p.m. Kids experience Bible stories through an interactive combination of music, art, games, worship, and drama! Activities for children ages 3 through 12 will last until 8:20 PM each evening. Bring your children or grandchildren! Invite your friends!

And...your help is needed. Can you help teach? Can you help do publicity to get the word out, or serve dinner? If you can help, call Pastor Aaron (503-226-3659), and come to a planning meeting: Sunday, May 5, 12:30. We’re looking forward to an exciting week of Vacation Bible School!

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Spring Cleanup on Palm Saturday. A little rain couldn’t stop us...and the results are beautiful! Huge thanks to leaders Craig Langley and Jim Wick, and to volunteers James Bash, Dan Dietz, Kent Fredrickson, Larry Granum, Bonny Groshong, Kevin Larkin, Steve Venn, Judy Wick, Anna and Sadie Wilde, and Pastor Aaron and Pastor Melinda.

Sign up now for...

CABIN CAMPING TRIP AT SILVER FALLS STATE PARK (near Silverton, Oregon)
August 14-18, 2019

2-night, 3-night and 4-night options available

Mark your calendars for a weekend of fun this summer. First Immanuel has reserved 10 cabins at beautiful Silver Falls State Park, near Silverton, Oregon, and you’re invited! You can stay just the weekend (Aug. 16-18) or up to four nights.

Silver Falls is the “crown jewel” of the Oregon State Parks system, famous for its history and serene natural beauty, including spectacular waterfalls. Nestled in the foothills of Oregon’s Cascade Mountains, about 90 minutes from Portland, it features the Trail of Ten Falls, a moderate trail which passes a series of breathtaking waterfalls along a rocky canyon, and descends to a winding creek at the forest floor. Learn more at http://oregonstateparks.org/?do=reserve.dspcabinsmyurts.

We’ll be “camping lite” in cabins similar to the yurts we’ve rented before. All cabins have electricity, heat, locking door, table and chairs. Each sleeps 4-5 people on some combination of bunk beds, futon couch or double bed. Also included are covered porch and bench, outdoor fire pit and picnic table. Families and individuals will bring their own food plus the usual camping necessities (bedding, dishes, etc.). For details, see http://oregonstateparks.org/index.cfm?do=parkPage.dsp_parkPage&parkId=151.

2-Night Cabin Camping, Friday—Sunday, Aug. 16-18: Cost for one cabin is $145 for two nights. This includes a group barbecue dinner on Saturday and s’mores.

3-Night Cabin Camping, Thursday—Sunday, Aug. 15-18: Cost for one cabin is $190 for three nights. This includes a group barbecue dinner on Saturday and s’mores.

4-Night Cabin Camping, Wednesday—Sunday, Aug. 14-18: Cost for one cabin is $230 for four nights. This includes a group barbecue dinner on Saturday and s’mores.

Full payment will assure your spot. Reservations are first-come, first-served. Tent camping is also available at a reduced price. Please contact one of the planners to make your reservation or with any questions:

Tyrell Servo (tyrell.servo@gmail.com)
Marja Selmann (marja_selmann@comcast.net)
Pastor Melinda (pastormelinda@firstimmanuelluth.org)

—FILC Congregational Life Committee
In Memoriam

John Armand Cecil Carson
11 May 1928—24 March 2019

John Carson first came to First Immanuel when he was seven years old, and he never forgot the kindness of the congregation in sending him to Camp Colton as a boy. In his later years he returned to worship and enjoyed a friendly competition with Waldo Johnson—Waldo was older, but John had been around the church longer. John was president and CEO of Carson Oil Company until his retirement at age 75. He loved the outdoors and stayed fit with skiing, hiking, biking, running, and other sports. Our prayers surround John’s five children and their families and his wife Marlis. A memorial service was held at First Immanuel on April 17.

Rest eternal grant him, O Lord, and light perpetual shine upon him.

Coming Soon—FILC Parking “Clings”

The parking task force is in the process of ordering window clings (small non-stick decals) to designate First Immanuel cars while using community parking lots. They will carry an FILC logo and name, and they’ll serve double duty of advertising our church while also identifying your car—so business owners know it is church members using their lot. Watch for a display at coffee hour this month. Donations gratefully accepted to help cover costs.

Plentiful Parking for Sunday mornings, Thursday evenings

We’re delighted that we have secured permission to use another NW parking lot at key times. Dave Chown of Chown Hardware has graciously agreed to let us use two of their parking areas. Here are the details:

**Sunday mornings: Gravel parking lot behind Mission Theater, 24 spaces**
- Enter from NW Glisan and 17th St, turn south at the Mission Theater—on weekdays this is the employee lot for Chown Hardware. (Please do not use Chown front lot on Flanders for Sundays.)

**Thursday evenings, 6-9 p.m. only: Chown Hardware customer lot**
- For Thursday evenings only, FILC members may use the customer spaces in front of Chown Hardware, on NW Flanders and 16th Ave.

Other great parking options:
- **Street parking (Sundays)**—On Sundays, street parking is free as meters do not operate. The only exception is certain Timbers game days, when a day pass is available at church.
- **Mesher Tools parking lot (Sunday mornings, Thursday evenings)**—corner of NW 17th and Johnson. Please do not block the doors.
- **Miller Paint parking lot (Sunday mornings, Thursday evenings)**—corner of NW 17th and Kearney.
- **Zone K, east of NW 18th Ave.**—Two-hour visitor parking is permitted 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Saturday. No restrictions on Sundays.
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<td>5 9:45 AM Ed. Hr. 11 AM Worship 12 PM Coffee Hr. 12:30 PM VBS Planning 6:30 PM Book Group @ Tyrell Servo’s 8 PM AA</td>
<td>6 8:30 AM Showers 1 PM RH Bloom</td>
<td>7 8:30 AM Showers 9 AM RH Beading 9 AM Lift UP Dev. Committee 12 PM Food Pantry 1 PM RH Bloom 2 PM RH Sewing 6 PM Executive Committee</td>
<td>8 8:30 AM Lift UP Harvest Share 12:30 PM RH Showers 1:30 PM RH Yoga</td>
<td>9 8:30 AM Showers 10 AM RH Knit 1 PM RH Bloom 5:30 PM Food Pantry 6 PM ACOA 6 PM Bell Choir 7 PM Choir</td>
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<td>15 10 AM Property Development Task Force 12 PM Endowment Committee 12:30 PM RH Showers 1:30 PM RH Yoga</td>
<td>16 8:30 AM Showers 10 AM RH Knit 1 PM RH Bloom 5:30 PM Food Pantry 6 PM ACOA 6 PM Bell Choir 7 PM Choir</td>
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<td>19 9:45 AM Ed. Hr. 11 AM Worship: New Members 12 PM Coffee Hr. 8 PM AA</td>
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<td>21 8:30 AM Showers 9 AM RH Beading 12 PM Food Pantry 1 PM RH Bloom 2 PM RH Sewing 6 PM Worship &amp; Music Committee</td>
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<td>26 11 AM Worship 12 PM Coffee Hr. 8 PM AA</td>
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