



The Voice



February 2024

10 Woodland Street Hartford, CT 06105



A new year has begun and we are diving right into transitional activities. While much of last year was spent on working on important budget issues, this year we are doing a deep dive into prayerfully considering who we are, what do we value and what is the Spirit of God calling us to be and to do. I urge you to participate in all the ways you can to discern the future of our church.

In this newsletter, I want to invite you to do some personal reflection based on several worship services in the last month. I would like to hear from you—send me an email, call me, catch me in the hall, make an appointment for coffee and conversation. To talk about the following:

Star Words. Those who were in worship selected a “star word” that might be a focus of your prayers and your reflections as we, like those magi, follow the guidance of a star. For some of you the star word you picked up may mean nothing to you....so let it go. For others, as for me, your consideration has led you to some understandings, perhaps some changes, maybe some new insights or a more clear focus on what you value.

My star word was “language” which at first left me uncertain as to what it means or why I might want to think about it. As I have prayed and thought about it, I am finding deep significance for me. For example: I want to continue to use nuanced language in describing God and people. I also am aware that I can be found in the middle of conversations and disagreements in which I need to carefully calibrate my words and how I say them, so that I am valuing the relationship while disagreeing with the person. Additionally there are special close relationships (for example with my grandson) where I want to convey affection, clear direction and correction in ways that support and build up the person.

Beloved. On another Sunday, we invited you to publicly renew your baptism vows to love and work for justice. Many people that morning came forward to receive a sign of the cross with Jordan River water hearing that they were beloved by God and committing to treat others as beloved. So for those of you who did that: What did that mean to you? How did it feel, what have you thought about it since that morning? How have you acknowledged your belovedness and the belovedness of other people?

(continued on next page)

Healing. Last Sunday, I spoke about how the church is to be a place of healing for oneself and for others. We are all on a journey of life and along the way, there may be events that hurt us, or times that are difficult, or a relationship falls apart or a myriad of other ways that we can be broken. God wants to heal us and one place of healing is the church. I have seen this so often in my own life and in the churches in which I have ministered. People wounded by life find unconditional love, deep connection to God, a place of forgiveness and a faith that helps them find new meaning.

Question: Have you found help and healing in your life? Has this church or another faith community encouraged your growth and healing?

I would like to talk with you! Let's get together! *Dr. Jay*



Be a Part of Immanuel's Individual Conversations Initiative!

As Immanuel moves forward with our transition process, we are grateful to those who have agreed to be among the Immanuel members who will perform individual conversations. **We could use 8-10 more people to facilitate these conversations!** These individual conversations provide an opportunity to deepen relationships and strengthen our Immanuel community as we further envision church priorities and consider the all-church survey. Over the next several months, we hope to have individual conversations with as many members of Immanuel as possible. It is a blessing that so many of you will be taking part in initiating these conversations, and we hope more will volunteer.

Many of you have taken part in individual conversations in the past and look forward to them with joy. For others, there may be some sense of trepidation in setting up a conversation with someone you do not know. Please join us in an orientation as we prepare.

What: Orientation to Individual Conversations

When: Saturday, February 10, 9-11am

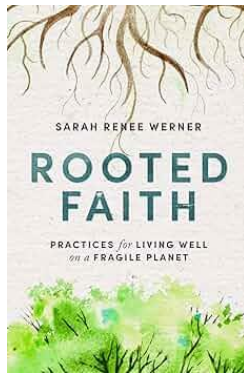
Where: Immanuel

Agenda: what they are, the spiritual background, suggested prompts, opportunity to practice, what happens next

Coffee/Tea, water, light refreshments will be provided

Please invite a friend who may also be interested.

RSVP to Dr. Jay, jayterbush@outlook.com, or Anne Stanback, annestanback@gmail.com, for the orientation and/or to sign up to perform individual conversations.



Lenten Book Study

ROOTED FAITH PRACTICES for LIVING WELL on a FRAGILE PLANET

**Wednesdays, Feb. 28, March 6, 13, 20,
7:00 – 8:30pm via Zoom**

Immanuel's Environmental Action Committee (EAC) members will facilitate its annual Lenten Book Study by reading ***Rooted Faith*** by Sarah Renee Werner.

"As temperatures rise, natural disasters wreak devastation, and precious species die off one by one, we know we must change how we live in the world. But how?" Author Sarah Renee Werner "...explores the future of the church called to live differently...drawing upon scripture, Christian history and practical theology, readers are invited into a new way of seeing ourselves in relationship with all of creation, 'offering' tangible practices for opening up our hearts to both the beauty and tragedy around us." (quoted from back jacket cover of the book.) In a recent sermon, Dr. Jay quoted theologian Walter Brueggemann's question to us, "What did you do during your moment of history?" As the environmental crisis looms over us, Brueggemann says ***Rooted Faith*** is "a winsome, accessible meditation on creation..." to guide us *in our moment of history*, in this environmental crisis.

***Rooted Faith* will be read, studied, discussed and led as follows:**

February 28: Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 – Audrey Chapman
March 6: Chapters 3 and 4 – Dorothy Buckley and Morven Barwick
March 13: Chapters 5 and 6 – Roland Axelson
March 20: Chapter 7 and Conclusion – A. Karim Ahmed

To Participate – Call/Email Sue Fisher, Church Office (860) 527-8121 / immanuel06105@gmail.com OR Roland Axelson (860) 817-2915 / rgaxelson@gmail.com

Please give email address in order to receive Zoom link.

How to Get a Book? Purchase at Barnes and Noble or order on Amazon - \$18.99

OR Get a FREE Book after Church Feb. 11 or 18 at the EAC table.

For information or if questions, contact Roland Axelson.

FUN

WITH CLASSICAL MUSIC



My 70⁺ Year Love Affair
With long hair music



BOB WILLARD

Sunday, February 25th, 4pm, Parlor
Find out why!

DVORAK, GILLIS, BLOCH, HOLST, SHOSTAKOVICH, BARBER,
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS, LOESSER, LERNER&LOWE, KANDER&EBB, PORTMAN,
BARTOK, COPLAND, BACH, HANDEL, MAHLER, BRITTEN, BEETHOVEN, KERN,
CARPENTERS, BILL EVANS, CLEMENS NON PAPA,
TRADITIONAL, SPIRITUAL, GOSPEL, JAZZ, POP, FILM, THEATER, TCHAIKOVSKY,
RACHMANINOFF, CHANCEL CHOIR, ETC., AND MORE.

Sunday With the Artist Program



Rev. Dr. Jay Away: Tuesday, February 6th, through Friday, February 9th

Dr. Jay, our Transitional Pastor, makes a regular practice of getting away for personal, spiritual retreat. Please hold him in prayer for days of refreshment.

Rev. Donna Manocchio will cover pastoral emergencies. She can be reached by contacting the Church Office, 11am-5pm, 860-527-8121, immanuel06105@gmail.com. Outside of these hours, Rev. Donna can be reached at 860-803-9202, dmanocchio1116@gmail.com.



Ash Wednesday Worship: February 14th, 7pm

We honor the tradition of Ash Wednesday along with our Riverfront Community Church colleagues. We join together in the Chapel for a solemn, intimate service, and imposition of ashes for all who wish to receive them, as we set our minds and hearts for the Lenten season.



Church Council Meetings take place the third Monday of each month; Minutes are available here.

Minutes and reports from Council meetings are available electronically in *The Voice* each month. You may also request a hard copy from the Council Clerk, John Scully. If you are interested in attending a meeting, please email John prior to that meeting at jdscully@comcast.net. He will provide you with an agenda and a Zoom link or meeting location.

Click [here](#) for the January Council Meeting minutes.

Launching the All Church Survey Results

Thank you to the many people (137!) who contributed to our congregational survey about our life together. The results are in and there will be a summary presentation and discussion at a Second Hour on Sunday, February 4th, after worship. Dr Scott Thumma from Hartford International University will participate in this meeting. He has met with our task group (Dr. Jay Terbush, Diana Evans and Mike Rion) and helped with the process and understanding of the results.

The initial highlights include:

- Immanuel continues to have a clear identity (affirmed in previous surveys as well) as a progressive congregation, which especially values worship (preaching and music) and commitments to both inclusion of all people and social action and justice.
- Overall, most of us really like who we are and the way we are as the church.

- Immanuel continues to be a ‘magnet’ church, drawing members from a distance who seek our particular identity.
- As in previous surveys and discussions, members have a range of opinions about how effectively we make decisions and deal with disagreements.
- Specific sections of the survey provide helpful information for relevant committees to explore more fully.

We will explore all of this not only in the upcoming meeting, but throughout the next months as Dr. Jay continues to lead our transition discernment process.

In the meantime, if you are interested (and have the stamina for approximately 140 pages) please ask the church office, immanuel06105@gmail.com, 860-527-8121, to send you the PDF of all the results. In the interest of complete transparency, we want anyone interested to see the entire survey results. As you read through all of the individual anonymous comments, we ask you to keep in mind the overall picture of the church that is emerging and that there are always divergent opinions which we respect.

A tip for reading the survey results: for each survey question, you will see a bar graph of the responses to the question. After each bar graph, you will find the full wording of the responses along with the percentage of people agreeing with that response.



Meet Our New Members

With great joy, we welcomed three new members to our Immanuel faith community during worship on January 14th. Please be sure to greet them, if you haven't already. Here is a bit about each one:

Sue Bailey



“I was born at Hartford Hospital during the time of the August 1955 hurricanes and have lived most of my adult life no further than five miles from my birth location. My ex-husband used to joke that I had signed a contract to never leave West Hartford, but I proved him wrong when I sold my house five years ago and moved 1.5 miles east to a condo at The Woodland, across the street from the church.

I retired in 2022 from the CT-DEEP-Land and Water Resources Division after almost 35 years, where I was an environmental analyst. I have a Bachelor’s degree in Biology, specialization in environmental science and a Master’s in Environmental Science. Prior to working for the state, I was a laboratory technician at municipal drinking water, sewerage treatment plants, (don’t worry, separate laboratories), and at Heublein, a distilled spirits-bottling factory formerly located on New Park Ave.

I have two daughters, Maia, who is 31, and Lily, who is 28. They both live in Brooklyn, NY. They are both artists.

After retiring, I obtained my Master Gardener certificate, and have been doing volunteer gardening at public gardens in Hartford, Windsor, Canton and West Hartford. I have also volunteered with IRIS, the refugees aid group.

I grew up going to Memorial Baptist Church, an American Baptist Church, on Fairfield Ave. As an adult, I moved to Broadview Community Church on Oliver Street, which my mother-in-law attended. Unfortunately, that church dissolved and I started attending services at Immanuel. I love that this church is so open and accepting of everyone, and committed to social justice and environmental issues.”



Lisa Lettieri

Widowed five years ago, Lisa is an avid reader, walker and hiker. She has a keen interest in politics, and works in financial planning marketing five days a week. Lisa loves living at The Woodland, and gets great pleasure from helping out and exploring new places.



Crystal Genesis Rose

Crystal recently fled their home after years of domestic violence, which had gotten worse after their mother’s passing. While homeless, they started their faith journey helping the street church, Saturdays at City Hall in Hartford. By volunteering there,

they felt closer to their mother and to God. After an incident at the street church, Crystal met Immanuel people at the Wheeler Clinic Pride celebration and started coming here. Their interests are video games, music/television, computers/technology, and cooking. Their talents include singing and I.T. literacy (information technology).



Dances with the Divine Art Exhibit in Fellowship Hall

You are invited to view a new photo exhibit, **Dances with the Divine**, by Candace Low that will hang in Fellowship Hall until Eastertime. Candace uses photography as a contemplative practice that has been a part of her journey of learning to live with a variety of mental health diagnoses, disabilities and

finding a path to wholeness of the spirit through receiving and sacred seeing. She explains this exhibit of photos and reflections as exploration personal steps in her dance with the Divine. What happens when the Divine extends a hand with the message shall we dance? What happens if we can’t reach back and accept the invitation? The exhibit will touch on dance that is solo or with God as a partner, with steps of connection, love, faith, justice, hope, prayer, forgiveness, grieving, disability, aging, and others. Candace invites each of us to reflect deep within ourselves and ask what kind of dance am I doing now? Candace’s photos are also available for purchase.



Y’all Drop In Choir: Join Us!

ALL are invited on Sunday, February 18th, to sing with our Immanuel choir. Arrive at church for rehearsal at 9am on this Sunday to be part of the action, fun and beauty of honoring God in song. No musical experience necessary; just open hearts! Hope to see you!



Weather Watch

During the winter months, information regarding any event cancellation or the closing of Immanuel Church due to inclement weather will be communicated via all-church emails, posted on the church Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/iccucc> and on the church website, www.iccucc.org, and broadcast on: WFSB-TV (Channel 3), NBC, FOX CT and these CBS radio stations: WTIC AM (1080) WRCH FM (100.5), WTIC FM (96.5) and WZMX FM (93.7). The information will also be available on-line at: www.wfsb.com, www.nbcconnecticut.com and www.foxct.com.

Collection of Items for the Hands On Hartford Food Pantry

Immanuel has been collecting non-perishable foods for the Hands on Hartford Food Pantry weekly since



the beginning of October. Your amazing response has been heartwarming and so appreciated by the food insecure. There is a definite need for your assistance. Hands On

Hartford never turns anyone away, so our help is needed now more than ever.



Buy a little extra each time you go to the grocery store - a box of cereal for your own family, and a box of cereal for Hands On Hartford. These are the items most needed by the Pantry:



- Boxed Cereal
- Oatmeal
- Pasta
- Rice
- Pancake Mix
- Canned Fruit

The deacons are asking you to bring non-perishable food items to our Sunday services (the grocery collection cart will be out each week). You don't have to necessarily limit yourself to those items on the list. Don't forget our gluten-free friends.



BAKE the World a Better Place: Join the Immanuel Bakers!

For more than 4 years, over 20 members and friends of Immanuel have been baking treats – bars, cookies, muffins – for our neighbors who come to Loaves and Fishes. Director Allison Hild tells us that our neighbors

look forward to Mondays, because the “Immanuel bakers” provide home- made goodies every Monday.

In the last few months, the average number of guests to Loaves and Fishes each day has risen from 80 to over 100 including an increasing number of women. There is so much need; more and more people, especially women are coming to Loaves and Fishes for sometimes the only meal they have that day.

Because there are more people coming to Loaves and Fishes, we need more treats – and more bakers! We hope you will join the Immanuel bakers. Four times a year, we each choose a date to bake 40 bars, cookies, or sweets. Most bakers bring them to the church office on Sunday, and some bring them Monday morning. We have substitutes if something comes up on our date.

Our homemade contributions on Mondays may not seem like much – but Allison says that our neighbors appreciate the love and care and the special homemade deliciousness of the goodies from the Immanuel bakers. Please consider joining us – it's fun and rewarding! For more information or to join the Immanuel bakers, contact Nancy Rion – nancyrion2@gmail.com.



Grants to Non-Profit Agencies

Do you know an agency doing good work you would like Immanuel to support? Grants up to \$1500 are available with preference for programs that serve needs in our neighborhood and/or offer volunteer opportunities to Immanuel members and friends. Please contact the office, immanuel06105@gmail.com, 860-527-8121, or Nancy Rion, chair of Social Action and Mission Committee, nancyrion2@gmail.com, for a simple application you can provide to the agency. SAMC will review and respond as quickly as possible.



Dinner for 150 People?? “Let’s Do It!” Responds Our Youth Group

Our youth group kicked off the day, on Sunday, January 21st, with an incredible display of teamwork and generosity. They spent the early afternoon cooking up a storm to prepare a delicious meal for the Center Church Sunday community gathering. With pots simmering, ovens baking, and laughter filling the air, our youth dedicated their time and effort to ensure a warm and hearty feast for 150 people. Once the cooking was complete, our enthusiastic young volunteers transitioned seamlessly into the next phase of their service. The freshly prepared meals were carefully packed, and the group embarked on a journey downtown to share their love and nourishment with those in need. Upon arriving downtown, our youth not only served the community members during dinner, but also took the time to engage in heartfelt conversations. The simple act of sharing a meal became an opportunity to connect on a personal level, breaking down barriers and fostering a sense of community. As the night descended, our youth continued to spread joy and warmth. They concluded their service by spending quality time with the guests at the nightly warming center. Laughter echoed through the room as games and karaoke

brought everyone together in a spirit of camaraderie and shared joy. Through their actions, our youth exemplified the profound truth that “God is good all the time.” Their dedication, compassion, and selflessness serve as a testament to the love and grace that flows through our church community. In embodying God’s goodness, these young individuals have not only touched the lives of those they served but have also inspired all of us to strive for a greater purpose.



James Hansen, The “Godfather” of Climate Science and Some Facts

The ICC Environment Action Mission (EAC) statement defines its leadership role to promote...*As an environmentally conscious church to strive, individually and collectively, to be good stewards of Nature and the environment and to address climate change through education and advocacy.*

In this month’s Green Corner, I want to first share information about an important Scientist, **James Hansen** who, since his appearance in 1988 before a Senate committee, has been considered a crucial figure of Climate Science. In addition, I want to share some facts to encourage members to be mindful of climate change in the midst of all the noise and demands of our busy lives, which can distract us from this existential crisis affecting us now and affecting future generations.

In 1988, while James Hansen was the director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, his “...appearance before a Senate committee conventionally marks the beginning of the era for climate alarm, when many Americans started worrying about global warming and why their leaders were doing so little about it. But in recent years he has

played a lonelier role – joining climate protests and getting arrested well before scientists of his stature doing the same...” In a recent paper he wrote, “Global Warming in the Pipeline,” Hansen stated that if fossil fuel emissions continue as they have, “We would be damned fools and bad scientists if we didn’t expect an acceleration of global warming...We’ve got to get this problem understood, or young people are in trouble.” (NY Times, Nov. 8, 2023)

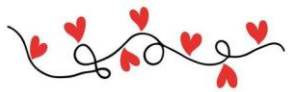
Dr. Justin Mankin, climate scientist of Dartmouth in a January 20, 2024 NY Times article argued that everyday people have a right to climate data which portends the risks of the multi-trillion-dollar price tag of climate disasters shocking economies and destroying lives, not just “private” risk managers. If this information is not shared by public/governmental agencies, wealthy and “...companies who can afford private risk assessments will rent, buy and establish homes and businesses in safer places than the billions of others who can’t, compounding disadvantage and leaving the most vulnerable among us exposed.” Regular people must demand true information. The people who lived near the MIRA Trash to Energy Plant

in Hartford deserved to know how their health was being affected because of where they lived.

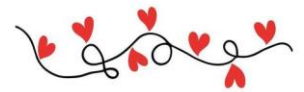
In a January 24, 2024 article published in The Guardian, *Devastating Drought in Amazon Result of Climate Crisis*, study shows, “if human-induced emissions and deforestation continue, the Amazon rain forest will reach a point where it can no longer act as the world’s largest land-based carbon capture sink. What can we do?”

As publicized in the EAC’s Lenten Book study of *Rooted Faith, Practices for Living Well on a Fragile Planet*, people of faith are called to live differently. The book study will offer an opportunity to examine a new way of living in relationship with all of creation, and heighten one’s awareness of what we can do as individuals and collectively “to address climate change through education and advocacy.” Awareness and education is power, to be able to live more sustainably and ensure for our grandchildren that they too will have a world in which they can thrive.

Roland Axelson, Chairperson, EAC



February Birthdays



2	Alexandra Soiseth	13	Anne Fusco
3	Darek Chrzanowski	13	Mike Rion
	Frank Hagaman	17	Reid Stevens
	Diana Joiner	19	Becky Henricks
4	Laura Nichols	26	Beth Jackson
		26	Dan Sullivan

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	2	3
4 8:30am Bible Study 9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10am Church School 10am ICC Worship 10am Riverfront Worship 11:15am Second Hour: All-Church Survey Results 5:30pm Youth Group	5 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom Diaconate Meeting	6 10am In-person Bushnell Book Study 11:30am Staff Meeting 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom Bushnell Book Study	7 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal	8 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 5pm Zoom Social Action & Mission Committee Meeting 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	9 6pm Snow Date: Our Whole Lives (OWL) Youth Program	10 9am Orientation to Individual Conversations 11am Florence Nicholas Memorial
11 8:30am Bible Study 9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10am Church School 10am Break Out Session Worship	12 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom Board of Finance Meeting	13 9am Zoom South Marshall Street Interfaith Coalition Meeting 11:30am Staff Meeting 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom Board of Christian Education Meeting	14 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	15 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	16	17
18 8:30am Bible Study 9am Y'All Drop In Choir Rehearsal 10am Church School 10am ICC Worship 5:30pm Youth Group	19 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Council Meeting	20 11:30am Staff Meeting 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal	21 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 6:30pm PFLAG Meeting 7pm Zoom Environmental Action Meeting	22 11am ICC Serves at Loaves & Fishes 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal	23 7pm Voce Rehearsal	24 7pm Voce Rehearsal
25 8:30am Bible Study 9am Chancel Choir Rehearsal 10am Church School 10am ICC Worship 4pm Sunday with the Artists Presentation	26 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom ICC Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA) Core Team Meeting	27 11:30am Staff Meeting 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal	28 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7pm Zoom Environmental Action Committee Lenten Book Study 7pm Zoom Property Committee Meeting	29 4pm Hartford's Proud Rehearsal 7:30pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal		

And Lastly, Some Fun Photos of Our Deacon-Hosted, All-Church Brunch on January 21st!



IMMANUEL
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

FARMINGTON AVE AT WOODLAND ST | HARTFORD CT | 06105