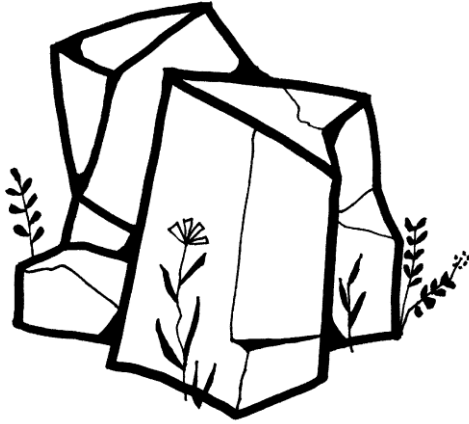


Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 23, 2026



Immanuel Lutheran Church

a Reconciling in Christ congregation

346 Shrewsbury Street

Holden, Massachusetts 01520

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*our purpose is to gather people, nurture faith,
grow in God's love, and serve God's world*

Welcome to Immanuel!

We're thankful you're with us this morning! Throughout worship we'll use the red hymnal located on the back of the pew in front of you. Page numbers can be found towards the front of the hymnal at the bottom of the page, with hymns towards the back, beginning with the Psalms. Hearing assist devices are also available – just ask an usher for help.

We believe that the Gospel – the Good News that we are loved, forgiven, and free in Christ – is a gift offered to every person, and that God's grace has no limits or conditions. Through Christ, we are made a community that shares God's mission to proclaim grace and peace to all the world.

Prelude

Gathering

*The Holy Spirit gathers us in unity on the first day of the week,
the day of Christ's resurrection.*

stand

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.

Amen.

sit

Celebration Song

I've Got Peace Like a River

Traditional

stand

Hymn of Praise

Blessed Assurance

Hymn 638

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

sit

Word

God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung and preached.

First Reading

Isaiah 51:1-6

¹Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn and to the quarry from which you were dug. ²Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah, who bore you, for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. ³For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. ⁴Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation, for a teaching will go out from me and my justice for a light to the peoples. ⁵I will bring near my deliverance swiftly; my salvation has gone out, and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. ⁶Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath, for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats, but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 12:1-8

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

stand

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia! Lord and Savior

p. 205

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.

Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 16:13-20

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will

be loosed in heaven.”²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

sit

Sermon

Pastor Josh Ferris

stand

Hymn of the Day

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Hymn 597

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Passing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

sit

Offertory Music

Offering Prayer

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus

p. 207

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

Thanksgiving at the Table

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

All is now ready. Come to the feast.

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

sit

All people are invited to receive communion today by coming forward to the front of the sanctuary. First, you'll receive bread, which is the body of Christ given for you. Then move to the next station, where you will find glass cups full of grape juice (lighter-colored) and wine (purple-colored), which is the blood of Christ shed for you. At the last station, return your empty cup to the tray. Gluten-free wafers are also available; to indicate you'd like to receive one, please simply raise your pointer finger when it's your turn to receive.

Lamb of God

p. 208

**O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
you suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.**

**O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.**

**O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;
eternal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.**

Communion Hymns

*O Savior, Precious Savior
Take My Life, That I May Be*

Hymn 820

Hymn 685

Prayer after Communion

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. **Amen.**

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Announcements

stand

Blessing

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

The Church's One Foundation

Hymn 654

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share the Good News!

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Nursery School Directors – Amy Drzik, Kristine Whittemore

Gym Coordinator – Walter Shanahan | gym@immanuelholden.org

Sexton – Don Roberts

We're thankful for these servants in worship today:

Livestream – Josh Greene, Gabe Ellis & Carter Gowdy

Assisting Minister – Mary Donev

Ushers – Ron Rosenlund & Jane English

Greeter – Emilia Greene

Coffee Hour Host – Jim Anderson, Eileen Connolly

Altar Service – Mary Jane Rasku, Heidi Lahey

Counting Team – Josh Greene, Barry Dellecese

Worship, Service, and Fellowship in the week ahead:

Today	8:00 am	Simple Church (Outdoor Chapel/Choir Room)
	9:00 am	Indoor & Livestream worship (Sanctuary)
	10:15 am	Coffee Hour (Gym)
Monday	9:00 am	Lectio Divina (Zoom)
Wednesday	6:00 pm	Backyard Campfire
Sunday	8:00 am	Simple Church (Outdoor Chapel/Choir Room)
	9:00 am	Indoor & Livestream worship (Sanctuary)
	10:15 am	Coffee Hour (Gym)

Daily Bible Readings for the Coming Week:

Monday: Psalm 18:1-19, Genesis 7:11-8:5, 2 Peter 2:4-10

Tuesday: Psalm 18:1-19, Genesis 19:1-29, Romans 9:14-29

Wednesday: Psalm 18:1-19, Job 36:24-33; 37:14-24, Matthew 8:23-27

Thursday: Psalm 67, Isaiah 45:20-25, Revelation 15:1-14

Friday: Psalm 67, Isaiah 63:15-19, Acts 14:19-28

Saturday: Psalm 67, Isaiah 56:1-5, Matthew 14:34-36

Sunday: Jeremiah 15:15-21, Psalm 26:1-8, Romans 12:9-21,
Matthew 16:21-28

Welcome to Immanuel

Thanks for joining us in worship today! Wherever you are, we're glad to have you with us. Remember you can reach out to the church office anytime if you need help, prayer, or someone to talk to.

Thank You – to Bruce for leading us musically today while Claire is gone!

Coffee Hour – All are welcome to coffee hour in the gym following today's worship. We thank Jim Anderson & Eileen Connolly for hosting today!

Altar flowers – The flowers on the altar this morning are given to the glory of God. *NOTE: If you would like to sign up for Sunday flowers, see the flower chart in Lawson Hall.*

Lectio Divina – Join us on Monday mornings from 9:00–9:30am on Zoom. Lectio Divina is the practice of reading scripture as a form of prayer. (Meeting ID: 814 8663 8380 Passcode: scripture)

Backyard Campfires – You're invited to join us for our last campfire will be on August 26, 6:00-8:00pm. Just walk around the back of the church building and join the fun.

Garden of Feedin' – Now that the growing season is here, we need help tending our garden. Email Molly (mollyndamcarthur@gmail.com) or Kristin (kristinsundberg7@yahoo.com) if you want to help!

Holden Days – Thank you to everyone who helped with Holden Days yesterday! It was great to meet some new neighbors!

Young Families Picnic – We thank the Dellecese family for hosting a picnic for the young families in our church yesterday! As a new school year begins this week, we pray for all our students and teachers.

Kick-Off Sunday – Our 2026 Kick-Off Sunday will be on Sunday, September 13! Together we'll kick-off a new year of ministry and jump into a fall full of growing, learning, and serving. Anyone starting or returning to school this fall, please bring your backpack for blessing! We're also planning a picnic after worship! Sign-up to help using this link <https://tinyurl.com/5bewzzd6>.

Worcester Pride Festival – Join us on Saturday, September 12 from 2:00-7:00pm as we join with other Lutheran congregations in the area to host a booth at Pride. We'll give out rainbow items and information about Reconciling in Christ congregations. A Sign-up to help host the booth is coming soon. To help us make rainbow giveaway items, stop by the Makers Ministry table at Coffee Hour.

Camp Calumet Getaway Weekend – Our annual Getaway Weekend at Camp Calumet is September 25-27 and you're invited! Calumet is a Lutheran camp in West Ossipee, New Hampshire and is the perfect place for all ages to spend some time relaxing, recharging, and having fun. This year our theme is *faith that travels*, and we'll be talking about how to develop a spirituality that changes and adapts as we do. To register, fill out the form on the letter we recently mailed (you can also find a copy on our church website and on the parish administrator door). Thanks to a very generous donation, the cost is about 20% less this year! If you have any questions, talk to Pastor Sarah or Pastor Josh.

Lutheran World Relief School Kits – During August we are collecting supplies to make school kits. The following items are needed per kit:

- (4) 70-sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper. No loose leaf.
- (1) 30-centimeter ruler, or dual-sided ruler (centimeters and inches)
- (1) pencil sharpener
- (1) blunt scissors (safety scissors w/embedded steel blades)
- (5) unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers
- (5) black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)
- (1) box of 16 or 24 crayons
- (1) 2.5" eraser

All donations can be dropped off in the narthex or Lawson Hall!

Adult Choir – Adult Choir Rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings, 7-8:00pm in the Choir Room. Our first rehearsal on Sept. 16 will also be a potluck picnic in Lawson Hall from 4:30 to 8:00pm. Our first Sunday for the fall will be Sept. 20 with a warm-up at 8:30am. All are welcome! If you have any questions, email Claire at cpstillhobbyin@gmail.com.

Positivity Pouches – Have you shared some positivity with our Youth Group recently? Drop a note of encouragement or some kind words in their pouches in Lawson Hall! Cards and small gifts encouraged!

Homeless kits – You can grab a homeless kit – and small bags of period products – from Lawson Hall for you to hand out to someone in need.

Communion Kits – Personal kits are available in the locker outside Lawson Hall. Each kit contains a pre-packaged wafer and grape juice.

Stephen Ministry – Stephen Ministers are trained to provide one-to-one, confidential care to those experiencing a difficult time. Please let one of the pastors know if you'd like to connect with one.

We are currently collecting:

Period Products – Unscented pads and tampons, individually wrapped, of all sizes and brands, handed out at Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry.

Greeting Cards – New greeting cards of all kinds (except Christmas), which are given to Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry.

Bras – Bras in good condition of any size, color, or style, which will be given to veterans in need. Contact Mary Donev (mary@donev.com).

Wachusett Food Pantry – Non-perishable, unexpired food items for the Wachusett Food Pantry (serving all Wachusett Towns).

In Your Prayers this Week

Adrienne Altobelli, David Alward, Bruce & Janet Axelson, Isaac Barron, David Beams, Mary Beams, Bob, Heidi Besse, Grace Bialecki, Tina Bodnar, Lucy & Tom Brennan, Ken Cameron, Bonnie Colon, Colleen Davison, Alvina Debois, Lauren Demerjian, Christina Deyo, Lina Dickey, Kim, Kevin Duguay, Tom Durant, Jaeger Dziama, Jim Eisenlord, Gabriella Falk, Alan Farmer, Tim Fournier, Leah Frances-Woods, Linda Friedman, Sonja Githmark, Ann Marie Grambo, Victoria Graves, Dave, Dolores Hadady, Bill Higgins, Erika, Rich Hopkins, Robin Johns, Dick Johnson, Jan Johnson, Carol Jorgensen, Karen, Mackenzie Keogh, Ray Langevin, Jean Lane, Joan Lane, Noah Lane, Ayuen Leet, Meghan MacDonald, Cristie Marsh, Alwin Masselink, James Mellor, Darin Narum, Joanne Neal, Edna Opatka, Karen Papachristou, Francis Parretti, Don Phaneuf, Shirley, Kay Porter, Jeff, Wylla Rabeler, Rich Reynolds, Ray Rossetti, Shirley Rotti, Donald Shefer, Anita Slater, Marshall Smith, Wendy, Steven, Shirley Smith, Tony, Elaine Vetter, George Vogel, Scott, Becki Welch, Liz Wilson, Jim & Nancy Zelesky, and Jill Zitzewitz.