

# IMMANUEL IMAGES     September 2025

## Worship Schedule

*Sunday mornings – the heart of our life together*

*10:00 Worship for All Ages – Sanctuary*

*Also available on Zoom or via our website*

### **Sunday, September 7:** 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 18

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 1, Philemon 1:1-21, Luke 14:25-33

On the first Sunday in September and following our summer sermon series on the women of the Bible, we will, for now, return to lectionary-based worship and sermons. Today our scriptures focus is on consequences. In the Old Testament book from the Torah (the books of law), we are offered an explanation of the consequences of following and not following God's laws and an exhortation to choose life. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus discussed the cost of discipleship, which in some cases, may be the loss of family and friends. The psalmist, too, offers a comparison of the ways of the righteous and the wicked. In what may be the hardest lesson, Paul intervenes in a dispute and grudge between two brothers and offers all a letter of forgiveness and reconciliation.

### **Sunday, September 14:** 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 19.

Pastor Dale will be on vacation this Sunday and Rev. Stephen Fair will be leading worship.

**Scripture:** Exodus 32:7-14, Psalm 51:1-10, I Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10

Forgiveness and mercy are front and center in our scripture lessons today. In Exodus, after God is angered by the Hebrews casting and worship of a golden calf, Moses encourages God to let go of his anger and forgive the Hebrews. The Psalm is a prayer for cleansing and pardon which we often read in the Lenten season. In Paul's letter to Timothy, we hear a word of gratitude for Christ's mercy. Finally, in Luke, we are taught once again about God's compassionate nature as Jesus shares the parables of the lost sheep, and Lost Coin.

Pastor Stephen Fair was ordained by the Chesapeake Association of the Central Atlantic Conference on May 31, 1981, at First and St. Stephen's United Church of Christ. Pastor Stephen served United Evangelical UCC in the Canton community of southeast Baltimore in addition to churches in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. He retired on June 19, 2023, and moved back to his hometown of Baltimore, where he lives with his wife of 45 years, Kathryn E. Barrans Fair. Kathryn is a retired music teacher and Behavioral Support Specialist. The Fair's are building a house in Baltimore County.

### **Sunday, September 21:** 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 20

**Scripture:** Amos 8:4-7, Psalm 113, I Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16:1-13

Ethical business practices and care for the poor are front and center this week. In the socially conscious book of Amos, the prophet condemns the abusive and unjust practices of businessmen. In Luke, addressing the disciples, Jesus teaches about the dangers of wealth with the parable of the dishonest manager who manipulates others for his sake. The psalm is a praise for the God who helps the needy. In I Timothy, we are offered an appeal and theological support for prayer.

**Sunday, September 28:** 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 21

**Scripture:** Amos 6:1a and 4-7, Psalm 146, I Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-31

Building on last week's lessons, Amos, the prophet, condemns the wealthy and their behaviors. Paul writes to Timothy about true riches and challenges the young follower to be faithful. Jesus, in the gospel of Luke, tells the story of the rich man and Lazarus, where the rich man suffers the consequences of ignoring the poor Lazarus, while Lazarus enjoys the comfort of life eternal in the presence of God. Psalm 146 is a song of praise for God's help.

### **Coming Soon:**

Sunday, October 5: World Communion Sunday

Sunday, October 19 : Vacation Sunday, Dr. Steven Kraftchick

Dr. Steven J. Kraftchick, a friend of Rev. Dr. Tom Long and resident Town Point, taught courses in New Testament interpretation at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta. He retired in 2020 after teaching at Candler since 1983. Prior to that he taught at Princeton Theological Seminary, Oberlin College, and The School of Theology at Sewanee: The University of the South.

### **Pastor's Message**

My thoughts this month for the newsletter will center on the "Women of the Bible" summer sermon series.

### **From Wikipedia:**

A sermon is a religious discourse or [oration](#) by a [preacher](#), usually a member of [clergy](#). Sermons address a [scriptural](#), [theological](#), or moral topic, usually expounding on a type of belief, law, or behavior within both past and present contexts. Elements of the sermon often include exposition, exhortation, and practical application.

### **From Pastor Dale:**

A sermon is a talk offered during a service of worship whose purpose is to exegete or interpret the meaning of scripture for the original audience as accurately as possible and then interpret its meaning and purpose for a contemporary audience.

The definition I offered above dates back to my seminary days and the first preaching course I took at Lancaster Theological Seminary. While I will admit I do not remember every lesson from that course, what I do remember is this:

- Sermons should not be Bible Studies.
- My Professor (a good Lutheran) said every sermon should include both Law and Gospel. In other words, every sermon should have something about God's love, grace, forgiveness, and saving acts AND something about what our response to God's love should be – that is, what does God require of us. After all, as faithful Christians, we believe faith (saying we believe) with works (doing what God asks) is dead. *James 2:14-26*

So, here are “My” thoughts on the sermons of the last few months. My colleagues of the weekly Lectionary Group have contributed to my evaluation of this series as well.

- I learned a ton. Sometimes people think seminary teaches you everything you need to know about the Bible and “pastoring.” To say, “that is not accurate,” is a massive understatement. Every week, especially with the help of my colleagues, I learn things new to me about the scriptures and pastoring. This summer, I cannot even begin to share with you how much “I” learned. For this I give thanks.
- Immanuel’s people, more than other congregations I have served, have always offered more positive comments than other parishioners. This summer I had even more positive comments than usual. People have told me these sermons spurred discussion and increased attendance. I was complimented for addressing “difficult” topics. Some even said they were “noteworthy” and (I loved this one the most) even kept some people awake! And while I suspect some folks were concerned about their length, no one complained to me about this.
- I was pleased with the way in which I organized the summer series. Early last spring when I thought about “Women of the Bible” as a potential focus, I initially considered picking ten or twelve women to preach/teach about, but was quickly, overwhelmed by the difficulty of picking just ten, and moved to picking groups of Biblical women united by a theme, like “Women in the Creation stories,” “Women who followed Jesus,” and, “Women of the early Church,” I think this was a helpful choice.
- One concern I, and my colleagues, had about this series was that it was more like a Bible Study and less like a sermon. What I mean by this is, while I did try to explain what the scriptures said about the women and how the original audience would have understood their stories and their faithful contributions, the weakness of these “sermons” was that there was not much “what does this mean for us today,” or “how are we to respond” to the words of scripture in our time and place.
- One comment I received from one very close to me, was that I was much more “tied to my notes,” than most sermons. I personally do not like sermons which are “read” from a text, and I found myself reading from notes more than I like.
- I enjoyed expanding on the themes and including lessons about the “science” of Biblical study. I hope you found it enlightening when I talked about the difficulty and decision making of translating words from ancient languages. I hope I taught positive lessons about the 5800+ “partial and incomplete” manuscripts unearthed by archeologists and assembled and interpreted to create the Bibles we read today. And I hope I didn’t frighten anyone when I shared that, even within a single Biblical book, there may have been more than “source” or writer.

**So, where to go from here:**

I might be inspired by the dialogue which occurs in the movie, "O Brother Where Art Thou." In the movie, the exchange occurs after the Soggy Bottom Boys have a close encounter with the law:

**Pete:** "I've always wondered, what's the devil look like?"

**Everett:** "Well, there are all manner of lesser imps and demons, Pete, but the great Satan hisself is red and scaly with a bifurcated tail, and he carries a hay fork".

In the Bible, Satan is never described in that manner, nor is Satan described in the ways described in Milton's, "Paradise Lost." Satan's description in scriptures is very different from these images and isn't even consistent throughout the Bible, and I might be enticed to address Satan or other topics in the months ahead. I may need to create a "suggestion box" for the congregation to use!

I might also be more likely to increase the amount of "explanation and expansion on" the scriptures being used in the worship. That is to say, while not eliminating the connection to modern life, I may be more willing to do more "teaching" about the original context and meaning of the biblical/lectionary lessons being used.

My concern with this, especially in this lectionary year where the prophets are front and center, some of the scriptures offer very difficult messages about nationalism, care for the aliens and the oppressed, poverty, and wealth, and I wonder if I can teach with the honesty and integrity about these "challenging" lessons as I did in this summer's series. Addressing the decline of the church and society, there has been a call by many (some of whom this congregation loves and respects) to stop preaching pretty sermons!

Oh, the thoughts I think.

Peace, Pastor Dale

## **General Synod Reflection - Ben Mercier**

Hello Central Atlantic Conference! My name is Ben Mercier, one of your returning delegates to General Synod 35. This session, we discussed a variety of resolutions ranging from full communion with our brothers and sisters overseas to commitment to upholding human rights in multiple regions. Overall, Kansas City did well to accommodate the General Synod body.

My assignment was to Committee 1, on Full Communion with Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, EKG. The UCC has previously communed with the German Church, however as the German Church has changed structure it was necessary to reaffirm our commitment in faith to each other. As a prudential resolution, the committee was tasked to approve the language of the resolution to update our procedures, and was given no additional informational intensive. Entering into committee meeting 1, it was clear the amount of time and effort the UCC Board had put into the resolution. Members of our committee offered minimal additions to the verbiage of the text, however these were ultimately voted down and the committee recommended passing the resolution as submitted. At plenary, the full body passed the resolution without amendments which will lead to full communion with the EKG, which I was happy to vote in favor of.

Along with the resolution on full communion with the EKG, the voting body passed all prudential and resolutions of witness, often with over 90% voting in favor.

However, we were also presented with a bylaws amendment to allow the UCC Board to approve Associate General Ministers, AGMs, to full positions without the vote of the General Synod. This measure comes at a time of political uncertainty across the nation which made the general body uncomfortable shifting electoral power away from delegates. I personally voted against this proposal. For one, once nominated, AGMs begin their positions without approval from the general body, meaning the general body is often voting to approve a candidate who has proven their capabilities to the body. If the UCC Board were to continue with another amendment of similar nature, I believe the body would be more favorable to an amendment in the nature of evaluating an AGM's progress at the next General Synod, with the possibility for approval. While it is important to trust our church leadership, we must also retain the ability to vote in the extremely unlikely occurrence of mistrust in our faith leaders. Ultimately, I believe this topic needs further discussion to affirm our faith in our leadership and to each other.

I believe one overlooked aspect at General Synod 35 was youth programming outside of our delegation. The youth at Synod program is dear to my heart, providing an early look into how we practice our faith as a community, while personally serving as my first experience with a public governance process. The youth program was my inspiration to study the public policy process in higher education. Youth at Synod has historically allowed participants to research and present on specific resolutions on the floor, providing another perspective to discussions. This Synod, the program was sorely missed. As we move swiftly to a 3-year Synod term, it is all the more important to focus on improving the experience of young church goers to inform their views on how the world works and the power of your voice. I hope in 2028, Cleveland and the Heartland Conference prioritize the youth at Synod program to bring a key aspect of our church back to the table.



**Ben Mercier** is a member of Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ in Frederick, Maryland. He attended Synod as a first-time delegate in 2023 and again in 2025. Ben also participated in the youth at Synod program in 2015, 2017, and 2019. He is currently completing his Master's degree in Public Affairs through Indiana University and lives in Washington, DC.

### **PRE-PAID FUEL 2025 - 2026**

This is just a reminder that cold weather is just around the corner and the need to keep our church building warm this winter is always a challenge. Getting help with this expense via our pre-paid fuel account is a big help in meeting our financial obligations. Our goal this year is \$10,000. Can you help?



*Diana Jackson, Treasurer*

### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

Next church council meeting will be on Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup> following worship.

As 2025 draws to the close will you consider serving on the church council. We will be replacing our retiring council members Chuck Hanson, Carolyn Price and Roger Segar (who is completing the term of Sam Shelly). We will also need to elect our Council President for 2026.



## WELCOME BACK LUNCHEON

Summer, vacations with family and friends are all coming to a close. Take a break from the rush of getting the kids settled back into the school year and enjoy a **“welcome back”** covered dish luncheon following worship on Sunday, September 7<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall. The Hospitality Committee will provide the meat/main course for the lunch—just bring either a side dish or dessert to share with others. You can enjoy both good fellowship and learn about the trips and fun enjoyed by others during lunch. You’ll have plenty of time to enjoy lunch and still get to see the “kick-off” of your favorite football team.



### SPAGHETTI DINNER

Mark your calendar for our spaghetti dinner on Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 to 7:00pm. Adults: \$12.00; Children 5-12: \$6.00; children 4 and under: Free. We will also offer a family package: 2 adults and 2 children under 12: \$30.00. Price includes: Spaghetti, salad, garlic bread

and drink. Carry-outs will be available. Homemade desserts will be available for purchase.

## CHRISTMAS IN SEPTEMBER

We will again enjoy our **“Christmas in September Snowman Pre-Sale”** on September 14<sup>th</sup> (second Sunday of the month) with items on display in the “hallway outside of the Narthex”. Diane Murphy will bring a few of her new “snowmen” for your viewing and advance ordering. These items, will also be available for sale at the Holiday Bazaar on November 15<sup>th</sup>. As has been the practice for the past several years, she will take orders for the items on display and they will be delivered prior to the Bazaar. Since she only makes a limited number of each “snowman” for the Bazaar, this allows you to order as many as you want of any given item. All sales from the “pre-sale” and “Bazaar” will be donated to the Church needs.

### HOLIDAY BAZAAR 50/50 RAFFLE

The Hospitality Committee is again going to hold a “Holiday Bazaar 50/50 Raffle” which will be running throughout the year with the drawing taking place on November 15<sup>th</sup> at the annual Bazaar. We previously held a “50/50 Holiday Bazaar Raffle” in 2018, 2019, 2023 and 2024. Tickets have been printed, some ticket distribution has been done and tickets have been sold by the congregation, at the Spaghetti Dinner.

We are distributing the tickets in packets of 10. The tickets can be purchased at three (3) different prices—1 ticket is \$5.00, 3 tickets are \$10.00 and 7 tickets are \$20.00. In the previous years, we have had great success with this Raffle as it is another means of supporting the Church, and getting the community involved.

If you would like to purchase a ticket(s) or get a packet of tickets to sell, please see Diane Murphy.

### **HELP WANTED**

The Holiday Bazaar is getting closer and we will begin receiving items for the "White Elephant" tables in October. We are asking for assistance in the "pricing" of those items. You will NOT be working long hours or everyday, just when we have an abundance of items arriving to keep up with the pricing and moving the items to other tables. If you think you would be interested, please contact Terry Malkus or Diane Murphy for more information.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**



### **TRUNK OR TREAT 2024**

Please join us for a family fun night. Dress up and enjoy the fun on Sunday, October 26, 2025 4:30-6pm.

November 15, 2025                      Holiday Bazaar

Tentative Date: December 14, 2025 - Chorus of Dorchester

January 17, 2026                      Waterfowl Hunt



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### September Birthdays

Diana Jackson	9/3
Amanda Leonard	9/7
Andrew Albert	9/8
Lyndsey Lyons	9/11
Amy Dodson	9/12
Claudia McDonald	9/13
Talan Middleton	9/14
Jock Luthy	9/21
Josie Travers	9/23
Jason Segar	9/26
Christy Ashton	9/28
Sherry Hoefer	9/30
Terry Malkus	9/30
Bill Bair	9/30

### September Anniversaries

Susan & Kenny Collins	9/2
Donna & Max Schnoor	9/15
Charlotte & Chuck Hanson	9/17
Nicholas & Stephanie Barnett	9/29

*Are you celebrating a birthday but it does not appear on our monthly birthday/anniversary listing? If so, contact the office: 410-228-4640 or email: [info@immanuelucc.faith](mailto:info@immanuelucc.faith) to provide us with your information. You may also provide an e-mail address.*

### **Your Staff**

The Rev. Dale Krotee  
Janice Haller  
J. Curtis White  
Lynne Breil & Tina Tyle-Davis

Pastor  
Church Secretary  
Choir Director/Organist  
Pianist

### **Your Church Council**

Max Schnoor – President

Chuck Hanson  
Carolyn Price  
John Adkins  
Susie Creighton

Debbie Luthy  
Mark Eberspacher  
Stephanie Dunnock  
Sam Reeder  
Roger Segar

### **Church Contact Information**

Office Hours - Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Phone: 410-228-4640 FAX: 410-221-6419  
E-mail: [info@immanuelucc.faith](mailto:info@immanuelucc.faith)  
[pastor@immanuelucc.faith](mailto:pastor@immanuelucc.faith)

**IMMANUEL PRAYER LIST:** *You are invited to remember these people in prayer*

**Members of Immanuel:**

*Jeri BOUNDS, health issues, friend of Don Rae & Kim Leonard  
Connie BARNETT, health issues  
Carter BASS, grandson of Jim & Susie Creighton, health issues  
Patsy CREIGHTON, health issues  
Wells David DODSON, son of Scott & Amy Dodson  
Bill FOXWELL, facing health challenges  
Janice HALLER, health issues  
Helen KROM, health issues  
Carole SEGAR, health issues*

**Friends of Immanuel Church:**

*Shirley BURTON, Robin Burton's mother, health issues  
Kent ELZEY, brother of Julia Neman, health issues  
Carolyn ELZEY, sister-in-law of Julia Newman, health issues  
Gerry KROTEE, Pastor Dale's step-mother, health issues  
Charles LOWENSEN, brother of Diana Krotee, health issues  
John LOWENSEN, father of Diana Krotee, health issues  
Betty MALKUS, health issues  
Debbie McCRAY, friend of Beverly Shelly & the Kozaks, health issues  
Mary Frances WARFIELD, health issues  
Terry VINCENT, friend of Beverly Shelly, health issues  
and Jill his caregiver*

**Other Prayer Requests:**

*Guidance in Immanuel's leaders for 2023 and beyond  
The leadership of Immanuel church, the need for people willing to serve to  
do the mission and business of the church.  
Our adopted child from Peru  
Dorchester County Public Schools  
Children at the border  
Those shot in our country  
Those suffering from natural disasters  
those dealing with COVID-19  
For the healing of our nation and the world, both physical & emotional*

**Members and Friends Serving in Our Armed Forces:**

*Hunter BROWN, U.S. Army, stationed in Egypt, fiancé of  
Laura Dixon*

*Jake CREIGHTON, Captain, U.S. Army, stationed  
Ft. Sam Houston, TX*

*Alton FRASE, Cpl, US Marine Corps, Camp LeJeune,  
North Carolina, Son of Andrew & Tracy Luthy Frase,  
grandson of Jock & Debbie Luthy*

*Lt. Kevin GRIER, nephew of Kathy Kelly, U.S. Navy, stationed in  
California*

*Buddy HAYDEN, friend of Robin Burton, U.S. Air Force Reserves*

*Keagan ROSARIO, U.S. Air Force, friend of Kim Leonard,  
now stationed in the U.S.*

*Lucas TOLLEY, U.S. Marine Corps, son of Leslie & Adam Tolley,  
Grandson of Lou & Dennis Jones, stationed in Okinawa, Japan*

*Jason T. WARDEN, U. S. Marine Corps, nephew of Michal Dixon,  
in Djibouti, East Africa*



# God's Lost & Found

"In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." Luke 15:10 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 15:1-10 (NIV).



T C S C O L L E C T O R E V Y  
 O L P Z N P T S P D M C I E V  
 Y P S A E R T A N L I L E H U  
 A H M E K I H E X O A S I O P  
 U O W S N Z I E J I I M X U M  
 W S G A I R L E A R G C P S N  
 E Q L R F L R T A V R S Q E S  
 O T N O K C V H C Y E O E L I  
 T R Q E S K P E G O P N E Q N  
 E E X X I T F R R I I G F Y O  
 A P F U R G E M I Y N N O S X  
 C E B Z X N H H E A E B U H X  
 H N K S N H B B N P T K N E M  
 E T X I R H C O O P G N D E Q  
 R P S X T S E Y J R S Y R P M

SILVER	ANGELS	TAX	COLLECTOR	TEACHER
PHARISEE	COIN	HEAVEN	REPENT	SHEEP
NEIGHBOR	SWEEP	FOUND	LOST	FRIEND
HOUSE	WOMAN	SINNER	REJOICE	LAMP

# SEPTEMBER 2025

*An open-hearted church, empowering people to serve God and the community*

Immanuel United Church of Christ  
5401 White Hall Road  
Cambridge, MD 21613  
Office: 410-228-4640

www.immanuelucc.faith  
Email—Office:  
info@immanuelucc.faith  
pastor@immanuelucc.faith

Kitchen & Fellowship Hall  
Closed—Sept 8—15

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 11a-noon Bible Study	3	4	5	6
7 10a Worship 11:15 a Family Potluck	8	9 11-noon Bible Study	10	11 6:30p Choir Practice	12 4:30-7p Spaghetti Dinner	13
14 10a Worship Christmas in September ▼	16	16 11a-noon Bible Study	17	18 6:30p Choir Practice	19	20
21 10a Worship	22	23 11a-noon Bible Study 1-6p Blood Bank	24	25 6:30p Choir Practice	26	27 Shower Fellowship Hall in Use
28 10a Worship	29	30 11a-noon Bible Study				

## COUNTERS:

Sept. 7 Tom Wilkison & Beverly Shelly  
Sept. 14 Robin Burton & Kathy Kelly  
Sept. 21 George Barnett & Bill Bair  
Sept. 28 Tom Wilkison & Beverly Shelly

## CHANCEL

ALL SUNDAYS—GREEN



**IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**5401 White Hall Road**  
**Cambridge, Maryland 21613**  
**410-228-4640 email: [info@immanuelucc.faith](mailto:info@immanuelucc.faith)**

NON PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 150  
CAMBRIDGE, MD  
21613

*Return Service Requested*

SPAGHETTI DINNER  
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 , 2025  
(SEE INSIDE FOR DETAILS)



**“Christmas in September Snowman Pre-Sale”**  
(see article inside for more information)