



**Welcome to ReFresh at Emmanuel
(Restoring Energy, Faith, and Relevance to Every Soul's Heart)**

September 27, 2026

Welcome to ReFresh at Emmanuel

Welcome Visitors! We extend a special welcome to our visitors. Thank you for worshiping with us. We strive to live as a Safe and Healing Spiritual Community for all who come, regardless of socio-economic status, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or spiritual path. All are welcome in this holy space.

We invite you to worship with us on Sundays at our 8:30 am Emmanuel Traditional Worship Service in the chapel or our ReFresh 10:30 am Service either in person or on ZOOM. The Recorded Service is available on Facebook after the service.

To gather online by computer, tablet, or smartphone, use the following link.
<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/82726742888?pwd=WFewOVbXZGd3OHFzSXQ1WXIVTHppZz09>

Don't forget to sign the greeting cards for our Emmanuel Family Members.

The cards are on the table in front of the Celebration Room.

Assisting in Worship Today

Presider: Pastor Frank Langholf

Lector: Bobbie Walter

Guest Musician: Josh Luebke

Communion Assistant: Holly Hansen

Accompanist: Clea Arbogast

Sacristans: Frank Hamm, Barb Horn

Altar Guild: Taj Guzzardo, Marcia Terrill

Consultant: Bill Houtkamp

Sound: Andrew Ehrhardt

Greeting Cards: Taj Guzzardo

Cardio Drumming, Mondays at 4:00 pm, Call Beth, (815) 742-0548, to join

Spiritual Journey's on Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 am on Zoom

Bible Study on Wednesdays at Noon on zoom.

Dial 312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 893 5688 8344 Passcode: 11999

To join by a land line or cell phone, dial the number above and then enter the meeting ID and passcode when prompted.

Silent meditation practice in the Benson Room: Thursdays from 5:30 – 6:15pm.

All are welcome. Enter by parking lot entrance. Questions or text Sara 815-742-0581.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 920 Third Avenue, Rockford, IL 61104

Mailing address, P. O. Box 4362, Rockford, IL 61110 815-963-4815 Fax: 815-963-4808

emmanuelchurch07@ gmail.com elcrockford.org

Pastor Frank Langholf, phone 309-509-5241, email: fslangholf@gmail.com

Date: September 27, 2026 Theme: Wilderness

Prelude: Clea Arbogast

Welcome Pastor Frank Langholf

Meditation: If you look throughout human history ... the central epiphany of every religious tradition always occurs in the wilderness.--John F. Kennedy

Our Community Declaration:

**Guided by Spirit's Wisdom, Inspired by Creator's Imagination,
Centered in Christ's Love, and knowing that God is our Source,
Emmanuel is a Spiritual Community that is progressive, inclusive, creative, and
called to serve.**

Opening of the Heart

In bright light and dull darkness
In the energy of each day and the rest that comes with night

We remember the goodness of God

In the heavens high above our heads
In waters that run deep around the world

We remember the goodness of God

In solid land and flowing seas
In vivid flowers and fruit laden-trees

We remember the goodness of God

In the rising and setting of the sun
and the cycles of the seasons
In the patterns of the shining stars

We remember the goodness of God

Continued...

In oceans teeming with fish

In skies filled with birds

We remember the goodness of God

In a world filled with animal life

And in ourselves as human beings

We remember the goodness of God

And God looked and saw all that had been made, and indeed it was very, very good.

In rest and reflection, in wonder and worship

We remember the goodness of God. Amen

Proclamation of Grace:

Presider: The Good News is we are beloved children of God. We live in the promise of Christ, and NOTHING can ever separate us from God's love.

Gathering Song: Where I Stand is Holy. (Chant)

Where I stand is Holy

Holy is the ground

Forest mountain river

Listen to the sound

Great Spirit circles all around me

Who I am is holy

Ho----ly are we

body, thought emotion

connecting you and me

Great Spirit circles all around me

What I do is holy

Holy is my way

Life and work together

Celebrate the day

Great Spirit circles all around me

First Reading by Henry David Thoreau

“We need the tonic of wildness...At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be indefinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature.”

Second Reading—Blessing That Meets You in the Wilderness—Jan Richardson

After the desert stillness. After the wrestling.

After the hours and days and weeks of emptying.

After the hungering and the thirsting.

After the opening and seeing and knowing.

Let this blessing be the first sweetness that touches your lips,
the bread that falls into your arms, the cup that welcoming hands press into
yours.

Let this blessing be the road that returns you.

Let it be the strength to carry the wilderness home.

Scripture/Meditation Song: Open Your Hearts (Covenant 336) Verse 1

Open your hearts, all you who hear this,

Open your hearts to know God’s love.

Open your hearts to hear His message,

Jesus makes us one.

Scripture: Hosea 2: 14-15a

Therefore, I will now allure her

and bring her into the wilderness

and speak tenderly to her.

From there I will give her her vineyards

and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope.

Presider: These are the words of an early Jewish community.

All: May we find wisdom for our living.

Sermon: **Pastor Frank Langholf**

Offering

Presider: We take this time now to offer our gifts and intentions.

Special Music: **Josh Luebke**

Time for Gratitude—We Are an Offering (ELW 692)

We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an
of-fer-ing. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our
lives, they are yours: we are an of-fer-ing. All that we have, all that we are,
all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you:
we are an of-fer-ing, we are an of-fer-ing.

Thanksgiving at the Table

The Lord's Prayer— From the Aramaic

O Divine Beloved, Your Radiant Presence shines in all the universe.

I will hold your Radiant Presence in my heart.

Create Your Reign of Shalom NOW...(Use these willing hands and this passionate heart.)

May Your Heart's desire become mine. May they be joined as ONE.

Grant what we need each day in Bread and Wisdom.

Release us from the burden of our failures as we release those who have failed us.

Break the hold of our distractions and free us from the fears that hold us back...and the evil so close.

For yours is the Reign of Shalom, the Power, and the Song, from age to age.

AMEN. It is sealed in trust.

Communion Music—Selection by Clea Arbogast

Prayer Song and Response: Bless the Lord, My Soul

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

Prayers of the People

**Linda, Lorraine, Deborah, Jerry, Vince, Miguel, Steve, Jim, Ruth Ann,
Andrea, Char, Coulter, Judy, Kathy, Kristie, Julaine**

Announcements

Sending Song: Spirit of Gentleness (ELW 396)

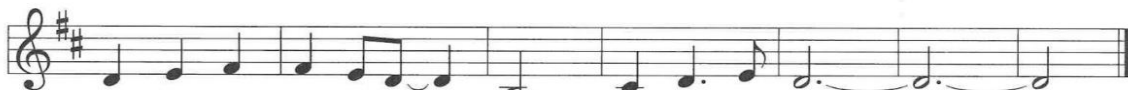
Refrain



Spir - it, Spir - it of gen - tle - ness, blow through the wil - der - ness



call - ing and free; Spir - it, Spir - it of rest - less - ness,



stir me from plac - id - ness, wind, wind on the sea.



- 1 You moved on the wa - ters, you called to the deep,
- 2 You swept through the des - ert, you stung with the sand,
- 3 You sang in a sta - ble, you cried from a hill,
- 4 You call from to - mor - row, you break an - cient schemes.



then you coaxed up the moun - tains from the val - leys of sleep;
and you goad - ed your peo - ple with a law and a land;
then you whis - pered in si - lence when the whole world was still;
From the bond - age of sor - row all the cap - tives dream dreams;



and o - ver the e - ons you called to each thing;
and when they were blind - ed with i - dols and lies,
and down in the cit - y you called once a - gain,
our wom - en see vi - sions, our men clear their eyes.



Refrain

"A - wake from your slum - bers and rise on your wings."
then you spoke through your proph - ets to o - pen their eyes.
when you blew through your peo - ple on the rush of the wind.
With . . . bold new de - ci - sions your peo - ple a - rise.

Benediction/Sharing of Peace

**You're invited to a simple soup luncheon supporting
Nine local pantries in the
Greater Rockford Pantry Coalition**

2026

815hungerluncheon

(Formerly the Mayor's Hunger Luncheon)

One donation. Nine pantries. Our neighbors.

**Wednesday, September 30th – 11:30am - 1:00pm
(Program starts at noon.)**

**Held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church
3300 Rural Street, Rockford, IL 61107**

**Get your \$26 ticket, donate, or sponsor:
815hungerluncheon.org**

Carpenter's Place Award luncheon on Sept. 22, where Bobbie Walter received the Helping Hands Volunteer award.



Women's Interfaith Potluck

All women are invited to attend the interfaith potlucks, listed below, which start at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a dish to pass. Plates, silverware, and beverages will be provided, but you are always welcome to bring your own plate and silverware if you wish.

- Monday, September 28, 2026 at Christ Lutheran Church, 425 Riverside Rd., Belvidere. The program will be about a new Rockford chapter, starting this summer of a national non-profit, "Sleep in Heavenly Peace ."

<https://shpbeds.org> This organization builds beds via volunteers so no child needs to sleep on floors or couches.

- Monday, October 26, 2026, at Muslim Association of Greater Rockford, 5921 Darlene Dr., Rockford.



*in
between*

October 10th, 5:00pm in Emmanuel's Sanctuary

Breathe In Between is being offered as a "thread" to hold us all together in the months between meditation gatherings. It will also be a place for open-hearted soul talk. While many members know each other from other sources, we are now creating a time for us to get to know those we are not familiar with or get to know those we do know even better. All are welcome.



FIX -IT-FAIR – Mark your calendar.

We are collaborating with Sustain Rockford

October 17th – 9:00am – 1:00pm.

Bring your damaged items to be repaired
by professionals at no cost!

Love your Mother [Earth] Repair, don't replace.

Held at Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Church Name Change

Emmanuel: a spiritual community.

People of Emmanuel,

We continue our journey into a yet unseen future as a community. We have stepped over the threshold, and are walking into our future one step at a time. **We continue to work on selling our building so that we can embrace a sustainable future.** We will continue to share the developments as they unfold. **We are also taking steps to make Emmanuel known in the community. We are using two tools for taking next steps.** One is **the summary of the Communication Team's survey.** Another is **the results of our visioning gathering on August 8,** especially the summary of that meeting. **Our call is to take the steps needed to emerge as a vital community** that welcomes and empowers people in their spiritual journey.

Our next step is deciding on a name which expresses who we are and who we are becoming. Thank you to everyone who shared their thoughts on the name in the survey. We have **chosen to go forward known as Emmanuel: a spiritual community.** Emmanuel expresses several things. It **ties us to our roots and ancestors.** It is **how we are already known in the community.** It **expresses our trust that God is with us.** We chose **"spiritual"** for several reasons. It is how **we define ourselves in our welcoming statement.** It is also **inclusive of the many paths people follow** in their relationship with God. We chose **"community"** for several reasons. **Community is about people not place.** Community could be used to translate the Greek word, ekklesia, which is what "church" translates. **"Community" is inviting to those who find "church" to be a stumbling block** to participating in what Emmanuel offers. **We will not be changing our legal name and we continue to be a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**

We will begin to use this name on bulletins, newsletter, social media, and eventually website and signage. This will begin to be implemented in the coming weeks.

We will be considering an icon, an image, that can be associated with Emmanuel. The survey indicated interest in three images; the tree of life, the labyrinth, and phases of the moon. Another was suggested at council, a river because of the river of life stained glass window and because a river runs through the heart of our local community.

You are invited to contact any Council member or Pastor with any thoughts or questions as we continue to walk together into our future as Emmanuel.

Blessings,
The Congregational Council