Immanuel Lutheran Church
310 Seguin Road, La Vernia, Texas 78121

The Rev. Eric M. Miletti — Pastor
Adrienne Kelley — Organist

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, October 18, 2026

Prelude
Welcome & Announcements
Brief Order for Confession & Forgiveness **(LBW)** p. 77
Opening Hymn ***"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"*** ***LBW #328***
Greeting & Kyrie *("In peace let us pray to the Lord...")* p. 78-79
Hymn of Praise *("This is the feast...")* p. 81-82
Salutation & Prayer of the Day insert
First Reading **Isaiah 45:1-7**
Psalm **Psalm 96:1-13**
Second Reading **1 Thessalonians 1:1-10**
Gospel Acclamation p. 83
Holy Gospel **Matthew 22:15-22**
Children's Message
Sermon Rev. Eric Miletti
Hymn of the Day ***"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"*** ***LBW #543***
The Apostles' Creed p. 85
Prayers of the Church
Birthdays & Anniversaries
Sharing of the Peace
Offering Hymn ***"Come, You Thankful People, Come"*** ***LBW #407***
Offering & Offertory *("Let the Vineyards...")* p. 86
Offertory Prayer ("*We offer with joy…*") p. 87
Great Thanksgiving & Sanctus p. 88-89
Words of Institution & Lord's Prayer p. 89, 91
Lamb of God & Distribution of Communion p. 92
- Hymn ***"Sent Forth by God's Blessing"*** ***LBW #221***
- Hymn ***"Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness"*** ***LBW #224***
Post-Communion Canticle *("Thank the Lord...")* p. 92
Benediction & Amen p. 94-95
Closing Hymn ***"Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"*** ***LBW #259***
Sending Response: **"Thanks be to God!"**

WELCOME TO IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH!

Welcome to our Visitors!
The people of this congregation welcome you as you join us in worship this morning. Join us for coffee and fellowship in the Parish Hall between services. If you have questions or are interested in hearing about membership, please see the pastor or contact the Office: Tuesday-Thursday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.
Phone: 830-253-8121 Website: lvilc.org
Email: immanuellavernia@gmail.com

Holy Communion
We come to the table this morning at the Lord's invitation, receiving the body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Baptized Christians who share this faith and wish to join us at the table are welcome. Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available. Young children may be brought forward for a blessing. If you are unable to come forward to receive the Sacrament, please let an usher know, and we will bring the Sacrament to you.

Nursery
We welcome children to be a part of worship. We also provide a nursery for those attending with infants and young children. It is located at the back of the Annex.

Prayer Request Card – If you have a Prayer Request, an usher will pick it up during the first hymn for the Pastor to include later in the service.

Offerings and attendance: October 11, 2026
Current Offerings Given: $2,848.00
Current Offerings Needed: $5,616.16 (Under $2,768.16)
Total Offerings Given (includes Dedicated Giving): $3,013.00
We had 123 members and 10 visitors attending.

Attendance Books – Members and visitors, please fill out the black attendance book in the pew and pass it down.

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God by Aaron & Sarah Fox and in celebration of Aaron's birthday.

The Word of God



Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, You created us in Your image and claimed us as Your own. Teach us to honor earthly authorities without giving them the devotion that belongs to You alone. Forgive us when lesser loyalties capture our hearts. Remind us that Caesar's image may be on the coin, but Your image is upon us. Shape us by Your Word and keep our faith, conscience, and lives centered in Christ. Grant this, we pray, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

The First Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him-- and the gates shall not be closed: I will go before you and level the mountains; I will break in pieces the doors of bronze and cut through the bars of iron; I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

For the sake of my servant Jacob and Israel my chosen, I call you by your name; I give you a title, though you do not know me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no god. I arm you, though you do not know me, so that they may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is no one besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe; I the LORD do all these things.

Psalm 96:1-13

O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

> **Sing to the LORD; bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.**

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

> **For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.**

For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

> **Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.**

Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.**

Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

> **Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."**

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar and all that fills it;

> **let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy**

before the LORD, for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.

The Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. For we know, brothers and sisters beloved by God, that he has chosen you, because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of persons we proved to be among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of persecution you received the word with joy inspired

from the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia but in every place your faith in God has become known, so that we have no need to speak about it. For they report about us what kind of welcome we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead--Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

Here end the readings. Please rise for the Holy Gospel.

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one, for you do not regard people with partiality. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the Caesar, or not?" But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. Then he said to them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" They answered, "Caesar's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are the Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

Notes:

The Season of Pentecost

The general tone for worship in the season of Pentecost, particularly during the summer months, is that of growth and flourishing. This season of the liturgical year is a time for focusing on growing in discipleship, deepening our relationship with God, and faithful obedience in following Jesus Christ. The long season of green Sundays is often referred to as "Ordinary Time." The word "ordinary" connotes the designation of Sundays by ordinal numbers rather than special names.

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For our new members and visitors

LBW	*The Lutheran Book of Worship* (the green hymnal, used for liturgy and hymns)
WOV	*With One Voice* (the blue hymnal, used for hymns)

Prayers Requested: Our prayers are requested for the following people (These will be on the list for 3 weeks unless indicated on the card for longer. Please update the office when changes occur or they need to be taken off the list.):

Marc Gray
Cindy Richter (Randall)
Larry Bailey
Shirley Franklin - cancer
A.J. Peterson - continues cancer treatment - by Jeanie Walpole
Ivy Baumann - Dravet Syndrome - by Patrice Goodman
Miranda Paige Metcalf - ROHHAD Syndrome - by Patrice Goodman
Wendy Marsh - Greg Marsh
Claudia J. Pianfetti – diminishing health – by David Pianfetti (his mother)
Pam Franklin - health issues - by Tony Franklin
The Gibson Family - by Terrie Gibson
Ronnie Moore - heart issues - Tim Ferguson
Jeffrey Adams - by Heather & family
Gary Beran - pacemaker - by Bill Roser
Harper - great-granddaughter of Ken & Bobbie Mills
Tiffany Trayler & Family
Eric Anderson - chemotherapy for bladder cancer - by Sarah Fox
Louise Farris - by Gloria Kipp
Sandra Mattke - healing from a fall
Carmelo Trujillo - cancer - by Darlene Reeves
Wallecy Real - by Bubba Andrews
Allen Orum - by LaVerne Roskydal
Dan Fox (Aaron's father) - dementia/proper diagnosis - by Sarah Fox
Gerald McCall - by Wendy
Gladys Meyer - Covid - by Lil Kosub
Janet Alderson - October surgery - by David Teel
Jessie Martinez & Family (Richard Gibson's mother) - hospice - by Terrie Gibson
Jose Rocha - cancer - by Shirley Haseloff
Bernice Salas - Cancer & Heart - by Charles Stork
Jerry Mainz & Family
Jason & Riley Lakey - for peace in new home - by Wanda Mabry
Linda Taber - health related - by Toni Smith
The Family of Florence (Mimi) Baumann
The Family of Natalie Neumann

Holy God, *you lead us through dark valleys shadowed by suffering. Be the strong guide and sure comfort of all who call upon you.*

Please remember in your daily prayers the following military personnel and their families: Taylor, Stephen, Eric, Kayla, Joshua, Kevin, Nathan, Farrah, Larkin, Ashley, Michael, Derek, Diego, Shawn, Conner, Ty

***Lord Jesus**, you are our merciful God. We remember and pray for all those who stand in harm's way on behalf of others. Keep your watchful eye on them and guide, protect, and strengthen them all. Prosper their works that make for peace, safety, and justice.*

Week 47 of the Liturgical Year
October 18, 2026 TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
ST. LUKE, EVANGELIST AND COMPANION OF PAUL
Hosea 5:8—6:6, 1 Corinthians 2:6–16, Matthew 14:1–12
Psalms 19 & 150 (AM), Psalms 81 & 113 (PM)

Prayer: Almighty God, source of every blessing, your generous goodness comes to us anew every day. By the work of your Spirit lead us to acknowledge your goodness, give thanks for your benefits, and serve you in willing obedience; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

October 19, 2026
Hosea 6:7—7:7, Acts 22:30—23:11, Luke 6:39–49
Psalms 135 & 145 (AM), Psalms 97 & 112 (PM)

October 20, 2026
Hosea 7:8–16, Acts 23:12–24, Luke 7:1–17
Psalms 123 & 146 (AM), Psalms 30 & 86 (PM)

October 21, 2026
Hosea 8:1–14, Acts 23:23–35, Luke 7:18–35
Psalms 15 & 147:1–12 (AM), Psalms 48 & 4 (PM)

October 22, 2026
Hosea 9:1–9, Acts 24:1–23, Luke 7:36–50
Psalms 36 & 147:13–21 (AM), Psalms 80 & 27 (PM)

October 23, 2026
ST. JAMES OF JERUSALEM, BROTHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BISHOP, MARTYR, C. 62
Hosea 9:10–17, Acts 24:24—25:12, Luke 8:1–15
Psalms 130 & 148 (AM), Psalms 32 & 139 (PM)

October 24, 2026
Hosea 10:1–15, Acts 25:13–27, Luke 8:16–25
Psalms 56 & 149 (AM), Psalms 100 & 63 (PM)

THIS WEEK AT IMMANUEL

Monday 10/19	10:00 am Silver Saints
Tuesday 10/20	2:30 pm Nursing Home Visitation 6:00 pm Play Practice (The Unbroken Thread) 7:00 pm Cantata Practice
Friday 10/23	**6:00 pm The Unbroken Thread Play**
Sunday 10/24	**Reformation Sunday (wear red)** 8:00 am Early Service Worship w/HC **4:00 pm 125th Anniversary Celebration - Divine Service with Holy Communion Followed by Dinner**

CURRENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

2027 Time & Talent Sheets

The 2027 Time & Talent Sheets are now available. Copies are in the wooden stands in the Sanctuary, Annex, Parish Hall and Church Office. Please complete a new form each year; last year's info will be discarded.

The La Vernia Christian Food Pantry needs donations of all kinds. The need in our community continues to grow, with nearly 310 families currently registered for assistance. Rising food costs, changes in government funding, and the current state of the economy have all placed additional strain on the pantry and the families it serves.
We are asking our community to come together and help ensure that our neighbors have access to the food and essentials they need. Every donation makes a difference. Whether you can donate food, household essentials, or make a monetary contribution, your generosity can provide hope and support to local families in need.
Please consider supporting the La Vernia Christian Food Pantry and sharing this message with others. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in our community. I will get the donation bin in the hall corrected as soon as I can. Feel free to reach out with any questions. I can pick up if needed. Kris Tripp 830-480-6631.

Items Needed: Canned Tomato Products, Soups, Flour, Cereal, Mac and Cheese, Hamburger Helper, Instant Oatmeal, Canned vegatables, Canned meats, Egg noodles, Peanut Butter.
Please make sure to check the expiration dates. Try not to leave anything that's within 2-3 weeks of the expiration date.
Thank you!

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########## **Christmas Market** ##########

Believe in His Great Faithfulness

Saturday, December 5th will be here before you know it! Only outdoor spaces are available; no food vendors. Hurry-sign up befor Friday, 10/9/26 to receive your discount. If you or someone you know needs an application, please go to ilcchristmasmarket@gmail.com or call Karen at 210-413-7665. Bakers, canners, crafters, mark your calendar as well and start thinking about what you will contribute to the Country Market this year. Last year, we had an awesome assortment of homemade jams, jellies, pickled items, breads and rolls, cookies, pies, cobblers, and crafts, which were very popular. Let's duplicate our efforts again (or make it even better) this year as we continue with our celebration of Immanuel Lutheran's 125th Anniversary!

The Sign-Up Sheet for Kitchen Help is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Thanks in advance!

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Immanuel Lutheran Church NALC
@ILC-LVTX
venmo

125th Anniversary
Merchandise QR Code & Website
HTTPS://IMMANUELLUTHERANLAVERNIA.MYSPREADSHOP.COM

Women of Faith Quarterly Service Project

Stomping Ground Ventures

A 501(c) adult day service that provides social and life skills to individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities in Wilson County

is in need of: Home interior paint & supplies; New pots, pans, cooking utensils; Greenhouse supplies; Crop cover seeds; New Texas flag; Sponsor for printing marketing documents; Gemstone beads and beading supplies; Dumpster rental; and of course, monetary or gift card contributions are always welcome and greatly appreciated!

— YOU'RE INVITED! —

Join us for a special performance of

THE UNBROKEN THREAD: 125 YEARS OF FAITHFULNESS

A 125th Anniversary Celebration Play

WRITTEN BY: LILIA M. MILETTI

Come celebrate 125 years of faith, family, and God's faithfulness at Immanuel Lutheran Church through a heartwarming and imaginative journey from 1901 to today — and a hopeful look ahead to tomorrow.

DATE:
Friday, October 23, 2026

TIME:
6:00 PM

LOCATION:
Immanuel Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall

Food, hors devourers, and refreshments will be served!



RSVP BY OCTOBER 16TH
to immanuellavernia@gmail.com
830.253.8121

SILVER SAINTS

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF LA VERNIA

Silver Saints

A Fellowship for Our Senior Saints & Friends

BUNCO

Roll the Dice for Fun!

Taco Fiesta Feast!

Enjoy a delicious taco spread with all the fixings!



CHAIR VOLLEYBALL

Sit • Play • Laugh
Stay Active!



A LITTLE EXERCISE
A LOT OF FUN!

LOCATION
Parish Hall

OCTOBER 19th
10:00 AM

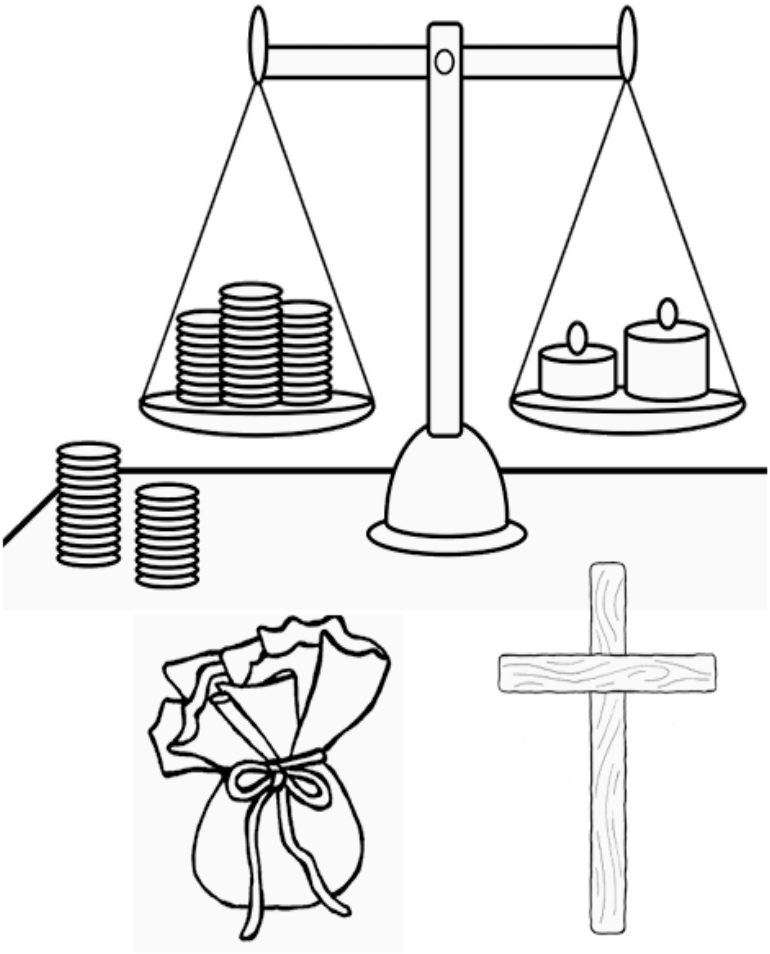
Bring a Friend and Join Us!

If you have any questions, please contact
Esther @ 210-215-7250 or Tina at 210-857-5572.

"For where two or three gather in My name, there am I with them."
MATTHEW 18:20

Today's Gospel Lesson

Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
October 18, 2026



"Give to Ceasar the things that are Caesar's,
and give to God the things that are God's."

Listening for the Promise

Weekly Devotional

The Rev. Eric M. Miletti

Matthew 22:15–22 begins with an unlikely alliance. The Pharisees, who resented Roman domination, join the Herodians, who were far more accommodating toward Rome. Their agreement is not political; it is strategic. They want to trap Jesus. The question concerning the imperial tax (*kēnsos*) is therefore dangerous: reject the tax, and Jesus can be accused of sedition; endorse it without qualification, and He risks appearing sympathetic to the occupying power.

Jesus refuses the trap by asking for the coin used to pay the tax. Significantly, His opponents produce the denarius. The coin bears the image (*eikōn*) and inscription of Caesar, likely including imperial claims with political and religious overtones. Jesus asks, "Whose image and inscription is this?" When they answer, "Caesar's," He responds, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

People often interpret this as a neat division between politics and religion. The text says more than that. Caesar may claim the coin bearing his image, but Jesus immediately raises a greater question: what bears God's image? Genesis 1:26–27 supplies the theological background. Human beings bear God's image.

The contrast is therefore profound. Caesar's image is stamped upon currency; God's image is stamped upon humanity. Jesus acknowledges the legitimate claims of temporal authority, but He radically limits them. Caesar may receive taxes; Caesar cannot receive worship, ultimate allegiance, conscience, or the human person himself. Those belong to God.

The trap was designed to force Jesus to choose between two political loyalties. Instead, He exposes a deeper allegiance. The real question is no longer, "What do I owe Caesar?" but "What belongs to God?" Jesus' answer is unsettling because it's everything—including us.