



Immanuel Newsletter

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From Your Pastor in the Interim

Decisions.

Like you, I've had to make some significant, life-altering decisions. One of my most recent decisions was to announce my retirement as the senior pastor at Oakmont Baptist Church in June 2021. It is a church that gave me the opportunity to serve as their youth minister for the summers of 1976 and 1977. It is the congregation that introduced me to my wife Leslie 48 years ago. It is the community of faith that welcomed me again in 1983 as their Minister of Education and Youth. And in 1986, Oakmont called me as their senior pastor following the retirement of their second pastor, Rev. E. Gordon Conklin.

Over 38+ years, Oakmont is the place where my children were dedicated, baptized, raised, and propelled off to college and careers of their own. It is the place that celebrated their marriages and the birth of our grandchildren and cried with us at the death of three of our parents. Oakmont has always been more than a job; this church family gave me my family. Oakmont, for me, is personal and not just professional. Maybe you now know what a difficult decision it was to retire and leave – at least for a season of time during the search for and first few years of a new pastor. While this “loss” brought some good opportunities and experiences to my life – one of which is becoming your pastor in this interim season – there has been sadness and grief that has accompanied this “loss.”

My guess is that many of you have the same feelings as we think and pray about some critical decisions regarding the future of Immanuel Baptist Church. This place has been “home” for many of you for decades. It is a place where you have worshiped and served, built community with life-long friends, and raised your children. It is indeed a sad experience to think about “losing” a place that has been so special in our hearts like Immanuel.

Opendoor Church has sent an Offer of Intent letter, desiring to purchase our church property. Our Diaconate, meeting on Wednesday, May 1 and following six weeks of congregational conversations, voted to recommend to the congregation that we sell the Immanuel property to Opendoor Church. We are also facing important questions about our future: can we remain as a viable congregation in the years ahead, or is there merit in affiliating officially or unofficially with another congregation? During the six coaching sessions I led last summer and into the fall at Immanuel, along with recent Wednesday evening conversations (March 27, and April 3, 10, 17, and 24), we have been working to lay a biblical and spiritual framework that involves spiritual discernment to make these decisions.

During our Wednesday evening conversation on May 1, we asked each other the question: After listening to each other, and praying individually and collectively, what is the Spirit saying to us about selling our property, as well as remaining as a congregation or affiliating with another congregation.

The Bi-Monthly Business Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8 at 7:00 pm. We are asking you to consider prayerfully the Diaconate recommendation to sell the Immanuel property to the Opendoor Church, with assurances from them that Immanuel worship services and weekly ministries and activities can continue at their current days and times through the end of 2024, after which we will reopen conversations based on our mutual needs. Opendoor Church has also committed to the Korean Mission having their current space at Immanuel for one year, at which time that relationship will be reevaluated. Any decision about Immanuel remaining or dissolving as a congregation will be made at a future time.

Decisions. Let's continue seeking God's will: nothing more, nothing less, nothing else. As we make these important decisions together as a church family, always know that God promises to go with us, strengthening us for the journey that lies ahead.

Your Pastor in the Interim,

Greg Rogers

Korean Mission Church Events in May

The Korean Mission Church celebrates May as Family Month. Starting with Children's Sunday on May 5, the 12th is Parents' Sunday, the 19th is Sunday School Teacher's Sunday, and the 26th is Pastor's Sunday.

In particular, there are four important events scheduled for May. The first, three events will be held on May 11th. At 7 AM, all Korean Mission Church members gather for a prayer meeting and pray for the world, America, Immanuel, the Korean Mission Church, and for individuals. And starting at 9:30 AM, there will be a closing ceremony for the Korean Language School for the spring semester of 2024. Lastly, at 12 PM, we will go to 'Strawberries On 903' to pick strawberries for the Korean Mission Children's Strawberry Picking Day.

And on May 12th, 'Mother's Day', we will go to Boyd Lee Park and go out into the nature created by God to hold an outdoor worship service. We will grill meat and prepare lunch for all Korean Mission members. And all the Korean Mission members will gather together and have great fellowship.

May is family month. Every Sunday, the Korean Mission tries to spend time thanking God for giving us our family. And above all, I hope that May will be filled with times to be thankful to God for giving us the spiritual family called Immanuel Baptist Church and the Korean Mission Church.

Happy Birthday!

- 14 Wyatt Judge
- 15 Jack Panton
- 21 Jeanette Moon
- 24 Norm Seibert
- 26 Phil Joyner



Meetings & Events

- Wed, May 1 -Supper, 5:30 PM
-Spiritual Discernment for Immanuel,
7:00 PM
- Wed, May 8 -Supper, 5:30 PM
-Bi-Monthly Business Meeting, 7:00 PM
- Tues, May 14 -LINKS, 5 PM
- Wed, May 15 -Supper, 5:30 PM
-Spiritual Discernment for Immanuel,
6:45 PM
-Deacons' Meeting, 7:30 PM
- Wed, May 22 -Supper, 5:30 PM
-Prayer & Fellowship, 7:00 PM
- Sun, May 26 -Communion Sunday
- Mon, May 27 -Church Office is Closed
- Wed, May 29 -Supper, 5:30 PM
-Prayer & Fellowship, 7:00 PM

International Student Trip

On Saturday, April 20 we took 16 international students plus three Americans to Fort Macon and Beaufort. It was a beautiful day. Students were from 12 countries coming from Europe, Middle East, Asia. and African continents. It required two vans. Fortunately Oakmont was able to provide one van and a driver. Students got to see a cannon fired at Fort Macon which was exciting and LOUD, and walk on the beach. They ate lunch in Beaufort and visited shops and saw lots of boats.

Happy Anniversary!

- 1 Ray & Donna Hrinchuk
- 23 Rod & Marlene Green