

## About Immanuel Church Congregation

**Immanuel Church is part of the worldwide church, with roots in Lutheran and Reformed traditions. The congregation is affiliated to the Uniting Church in Sweden (Equmeniakyrkan) and share the same view of the church and congregation as expressed in the Theological Foundation and Statutes of the Uniting Church in Sweden. As we are taking part in a larger context, we share the joy and the responsibility of local, national, and international work through joint decisions in our denomination.**

Immanuel Church is God's creation and is a fellowship of believers. We invite everyone who acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to become a member of the church. Membership is an expression of the desire to belong to Jesus Christ and share the responsibility for the congregation. Anyone wishing to become a member of the congregation talks to the Senior Pastor about faith, baptism and Christian fellowship. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes)**

Our mission is based on Jesus' calling to spread the gospel to all. We want to do this with sensitivity. Each person should be met with respect for his or her integrity, searching and dignity. **(Our Vision)**

Immanuel Church is an "open" church and by that we mean first and foremost...

- That we respect how each separate member or individual chooses to express his or her faith and live his or her life. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes)**
- That we as a church do not represent or convey norms or frames for people's faith and life other than to love each other. **(Our Vision)**
- That everyone who encounters the Word of God is called upon to interpret it, and to be guided along by it, together with others in the congregation, under the guidance of the Spirit. **(Theological Foundation of Uniting Church of Sweden / The Word of God)**

We as a congregation have also made some other important choices, for example:

- We welcome women as pastors and leaders. **(Decision in the General Conference of Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, 1950)**
- There is just one baptism. The congregation performs different baptismal practices. **(Theological Foundation of Uniting Church of Sweden / Baptism)**

- We offer same-sex marriage. **(Possible according to Swedish law from 2009. Decision made in Mission Covenant Church of Sweden Church conference in May 2010 that this question is to be decided by each local congregation. This is a practice thereafter in Immanuel Church after dialogue in the Church Board and consultation with the congregational pastors. Before 2010 the practice in Immanuel Church was to bless registered partnership).**

Every elected official, voluntary leader, and employee in the congregation needs to respect the open stances of the congregation that has been decided upon and cooperate with those who stand for the congregations' outspoken positions, so that diversity and respect for differences in Christ can be safeguarded. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes and Our Vision)**

We are one congregation, with many different parts, traditions, and ministries. This diversity enriches our congregation and has for a long time been part of the identity of Immanuel Church. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes)**

But everything we do as a church starts in the togetherness, not in the individual parts. The church is more than the sum of its parts. We are one body where the different parts are connected in a distinct whole. **(Congregational Constitution / Foundational Principles)**

Through this diversity, we want to make more people involved in the life and community of the church. Celebrating worship services in several languages is an expression of this diversity. **(Our Vision)**

The various parts need to be clearly integrated with each other, and actively cooperate in the various activities of our congregation, without losing their own uniqueness. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes)**

As a member of the congregation, you have a responsibility to support and maintain the democratic principles on which the congregation is built. **(Congregational Constitution / Congregational Statutes and Byelaws)**

The church is led by the Board jointly with the Senior Pastor. Together they have the overall responsibility for all work within the congregation. **(Congregational Constitution / Byelaws §4)**

2023-10-15

/ The Board of Immanuel Church