

# THE MESSENGER

The monthly newsletter for members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa January 2022

(Poem taken from Missionary Karen's newsletter in Chile.)

## The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angel is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among brothers and sisters,  
To make music in the heart.

-Howard Thurman

## JANUARY FORUMS

### CONSTITUTIONAL FORUM:

Sunday, Jan. 16, 10:15am following worship.

Anyone is invited to come to the forum to ask questions or raise concerns so we can all be fully prepared to update our constitution at our February 6th

Annual Meeting.

The Constitution was mailed out almost two years ago, but if you need another

copy, you may pick one up in the church office or find it on the website.

### BUDGET FORUM:

Sunday, Jan. 23, 10:15am followship worship.

Anyone interested in hearing about the proposed budget is encouraged to

Attend this forum.

The 2022 Budget will be presented by the Finance Committee at the February 6th

Annual Meeting and brought to a vote.

## Immanuel's Congregational Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 6, 10:15am (or immediately following worship)

All members are invited and encouraged to participate in our Congregational Annual Meeting.

Business of the meeting will include voting on the proposed 2022 Budget, and the changes made to the Constitution that were presented at the 2020 and 2021 Annual Meetings. This constitution is available online at the [immanuelfamily.com](http://immanuelfamily.com) website or printed copies are in the church office. (See Pastor Rod's article in this Messenger for more information on the Constitution.)

New Council members will also be installed.

## Letter from Pastor

### You Want Me to Read What?

A constitution may possibly be the most boring read of anything outside of a dictionary. Pardon me if you are one of those people who enjoys reading the dictionary, you are quite unique. But, yes, I would like you all to read your church's constitution.

Continued on page 2

## Red Letter Christmas Program

see article on page 3



# Letter from Pastor

## You Want Me to Read What?

*Continued from page 1...*

The good news is that you do not have to memorize it or read it over – and - over again like I would encourage you to read your Bible or other religious or spiritual texts.



Constitutions are very important guiding documents for organizations, governments, and other institutions. On a day-to-day basis we do not think about constitutions or their importance, until there arises an issue, typically an issue of disagreement, or conflict, or uncertainty about how a situation or matter needs to be handled. It is in those moments when an organization or governing body relies on and leans into the guidance and wisdom that a constitution can and should offer.

At the time when that wisdom and guidance is needed most is precisely the time when you do not want to discover your constitution is out of date or inadequate. In a time of crisis leaders and organization members and associate count on a clear up to date document that is in good order. If this is not the case, the institution will quickly regret the fact that a lack of attention to their constitution is in that moment not only failing them, but even adding fuel to a fire.

The constitution of the United States has been and continues to be tested in these times of deep division. Thankfully, so far, the integrity of the constitution has held, and it is important that we as citizens continue to hold our politician's feet to the fire to maintain and protect that integrity.

In the church, we too are governed by a constitution. Because we are part of a larger body, a body beyond our local congregation, there is a model constitution provided for congregations that serves as a starting place for our work together. We as a congregation have the right and responsibility to make that constitution our own, and to maintain it in a way that it conforms to the model constitution, serves to benefit the congregation in our day-to day life together, and serves the body of Christ with integrity.

Your church council will be prepared to offer to the congregation at our February 6, 2022 annual meeting, changes to Immanuel's constitution which will bring it into conformity with the model constitution of the ELCA, update articles, and by-laws so they more accurately reflect actual practices as we currently carry them out, and updates that will serve this congregation in the years ahead.

I pray that we stay so focused on ministry that we never have need or occasion to become embroiled in a conflict which demands the full strength of our constitution, however, I as your Pastoral leader and your church council are determined to have such a constitution in place

that it's wisdom and guidance will see us through any such time that may come.

Please read your church's constitution. It was mailed to you two years ago and those updates are still current and need action. If you no longer have your copy, one can be picked up in the church office, or found at [Immanuelfamily.com](http://Immanuelfamily.com). We will also host a constitutional forum of Sunday January 16th following worship. After you've read your constitution, please come to the forum to ask questions or raise concerns so that we can all be fully prepared to update our constitution at our annual meeting.

Pastor Rod

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## Immanuel Kids



### The Trinity Snowman Flannel Board Story

When you see a snowman  
Three snowballs round,  
He is reminding you  
That in God Three in One are found.

The bottom reminds us of God the Father,  
Our strong rock and foundation  
The Creator of all living things,  
People, tribes and nations.

The middle shows us God the Son  
With His arms spread open wide.  
Who died on the cross for each of us  
Our sins Jesus' blood did hide.

The head reminds us of God the Holy Spirit  
Who is our counselor and friend,  
He speaks to our hearts and minds  
Transforming us in the likeness of Him.

So when you see a snowman  
In the midst of all the wintertime fun,  
Listen carefully and he'll tell you,  
"Remember, God is Three in One."

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## Taking "Stock" in Immanuel High School Youth

If you haven't heard, we have registered 11 students and 3 adult leaders for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering! I am very much looking forward to this event, especially knowing all 14 of us will be experiencing it for the very first time! The Gathering theme is "Boundless: God Beyond Measure," and we will be exploring this topic through mass worship, interactive learning and Bible study, and service learning.

We are absolutely blown away by the support we have received so far in fundraising. Between our Kick-Off French Toast Breakfast and some extremely generous donations, we have already surpassed \$1,000! WOW! Our fundraising goal for this event is \$5,000. If we can surpass this goal, we can potentially decrease family contribution costs, which would be so cool to achieve. We have plans for fundraising throughout the new year, but we have an opportunity for an interactive fundraiser you can donate to RIGHT NOW or any time leading up to our trip!

The Immanuel Youth are inviting you to take "STOCK" in them by purchasing "shares" in our trip. You can choose to donate any amount (cash or checks to "Immanuel Lutheran Church" with note "Immanuel Youth Gathering"), and a stock certificate in your name will be hung in the downstairs hallway. All who participate in this fundraiser will be invited to a Shareholder's Breakfast in August for fellowship, a photo presentation, and story-telling with the youth who attend the Gathering. We would love to see you take "ownership" in our trip and to be able to thank you DIRECTLY as we share what your generosity will have allowed us to experience. Blank certificates will be available in the main office, or you can send/leave a donation with your name and a certificate will be made for you!

Thank you always for your support! These kids are rockstars; we are so blessed to have these young people who genuinely desire to emulate Jesus in our midst.

Ann Hunhoff



## Promiseland

### Promiseland Families,



Tasha Banta

We see the colors of Christmas all around us during the Christmas season. In lights, decorations, and even in our clothes.

"Red-Letter Christmas" gives these colors new meaning, telling the story of Jesus' birth.

The color gold reminds of us the angels who brought a message to Mary.

Green takes us back to the grassy fields where shepherds watched over their sheep.

White and blue tell of the star in the sky that leads the wiseman to Bethlehem.

And red is the color of Jesus' words in the Bible, reminding of His sacrifice to us on the cross. Red is the color of salvation, the red that makes us see, the words that Jesus told us, the blood that sets us free!

In this season and all of the seasons that follow, I pray you see the colors of the world in a way that reminds you each day of the sacrifice and love that Jesus has for each of us and the promise of everlasting life with Him.



# Board notes

## Mission & Outreach

Sharon Rieffer

The members of the board met via ZOOM. Those present were: Becky Stumme, Ken Korth, Jaci Thorson, Nic Determann, and Sharen Rieffer. For devotions Sharen read a poem on Christmas.

We discussed the results of the Thanksgiving Meal free will offering which will be divided in half between our local food bank and our missionary, Karen Anderson. At the time of the meeting, we did not have exact amounts to go to these causes. The meal was well attended and people were generous in their giving.

Funds for our missionary, Karen Anderson, will still be coming in for the month of December and from our Thanksgiving meal. The amounts given thus far were not available at the time of the meeting. We are thankful for the generous hearts of our congregational members and trust we will reach and perhaps exceed our goal—anything over \$5,000 will be carried over for next year's commitment.

Two "Good Gifts" trees are set enabling congregational members to contribute to this cause which helps people throughout the world. Thanks to those who have purchased 'good gift' ornaments.

A few more items were donated to International and other students who are in need at Waldorf University. If anyone would care to contribute to this special program please refer to the November "Messenger" article about this outreach.

The board discussed what the first quarter emphasis for next year should be. A motion was made by Ken Korth and seconded by Nic Determann that we would like to focus on hunger issues: our local Food Bank, Immanuel's Wednesday evening meals and World Hunger. Nic will present this recommendation to the Council.

## Trustees' Notes

Bink Keller

The Board of Trustees met on December 13, 2021 at the church. November income was \$40,681.81 and expenses were \$36,489.89 with a positive \$4,192.73 for the month. Expenses were decreased by \$10,000 borrowed from the contingency fund. YTD Actual is a Negative (\$44,491.20) compared to 2020 YTD of (\$56,656.05). \$5,000 Remains in the contingency fund in savings.

**Endowment:** Endowment Fund distributions were reviewed. \$2,000 to 2022 Youth trip, \$2,000 to Pastor Rod's 2022 continuing ed, and \$1,000 to Pastor Zech's 2022 continuing ed were approved. \$1,134 is left for 2021 distribution.

**Property Committee:** A walk thru of the parsonage as recommended by the synod was done on December 10, 2021. A list of inside, outside, and basement concerns were put on a list. Mike will take care of some of the inside repairs.

**Personnel Committee:** Policy handbook item #1250 Sexual Harassment was revised and approved for council approval.

**New Business:** 2022 Budget is still being worked on.

**Old Business:** a.) Bethany Lutheran Staff sharing and Quarterly vitality group update: A 3% increase will be presented to Bethany for 2022 pastoral support.

## Parish Council

Linda Ferjak

Council met on December 13, 2021 with an In Person/Zoom Hybrid format. Pastor Rod and Pastor Zech were in attendance. Meeting was called to order by President Daryl Krieger and November minutes were approved.

Pastor Rod reported on the progress in preparing for the Annual Meeting and Presenting the Constitution. Letters have been sent to congregates concerning the financial giving for the budget. He reported on his meeting with the Woden/Titonka Parishes in regard to discussion of the internship program.

Pastor Zech reported on a good month with family time and the hybrid materials for the youth. There will be different events for the 28 days of Advent. He continues to work with the sound for both Wednesdays and Sundays to improve the quality of our output. He is working with the Hybrid team, using the term "interlink community" as our reference. He is working with the middle school youth group with "A Day in the Life of Jesus" as well as working with the pre-recorded additions to the Christmas worship services.

Financial Report was given and is published in the Messenger.

Christmas Eve services will remain as planned with communion kits being used in the interest of time. Hand sanitizer will be available and encouraged.

Council Nominations were discussed and names were confirmed.

Constitution Updates were reviewed. A forum for questions with the constitution will be held on January 16, directly after the church service. This is prior to the date of the Annual Meeting.

The Finance committee has discussed the possibility of an Intern Pastor, partially financed by our endowment, which would allow us to assist small, outlying congregations that will be in need of sharing pastors at this point. This is about our congregation being a teaching and leading congregation, sharing with those in need. It was decided to have a discussion at the Annual Meeting regarding this situation and see where the congregation sees this going.

Discussion was continued on the usage of the computers, that were purchased with funds from the grant, for community usage for those that do not have access to computer technology. There is a need to set up guidelines and personnel to manage the usage of the computer lab.

Board reports were presented. Meeting was adjourned.

## Parish Life

Karen Keller

The Board of Parish Life met on Tuesday, December 7, 2021.

Mary has been working on finding ushers for Sundays and Christmas Eve services. Tina Berg has volunteered for both Christmas services and will also be in charge of the deposit. Several names were suggested, and Mary will get in touch with them.

We will be giving little bags with treats in them to children who attend the Christmas Eve services. We discussed what should be included in the bags. Mary will check HyVee for prices and availability of apples and candy canes. It was also suggested that she get bulk candy to add to the bags. We are estimating 100 children between the two services. Pastor Zech will write something about Christmas to include in the bags. Several members of the board volunteered to help fill the bags closer to the Christmas Eve services.

## This is the song that never ends



As I sit here writing today, a song comes to mind and it's the song from Lambchop, "This is the song that never ends, yes it goes on and, on my friends," Why this song? Well, this past Advent season we took a look at the Magnificat. We took a deeper look into other songs as well as songs from the Bible. On Christmas we explored the song and praise of the angels, "Glory to God in the Highest". But the music didn't stop there, the praises didn't end on Christmas. There's a section of Luke 2 that sometimes gets skipped over in the lectionary, but it too has a song. The song of Simeon.

This takes place immediately after the Christmas story, in Luke 2. Jesus is being taken to be circumcised in Jerusalem and there was Simeon waiting. He was told he would not die until he saw the Messiah. He was moved by the Spirit to go to the temple courts, saw Jesus and grabbed him with excitement. These are his words,

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel....This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

Not only was Simeon singing praises to God, but there was also a woman prophet, Anna, who "gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem."

Glory to God in the Highest, glory to the one who brings salvation, the one who will redeem Jerusalem. These people knew who Jesus was and what was going to happen. So much joy and praise to God for sending a light of revelation to all the nations.

The song didn't end on Christmas, the praise didn't end with Mary, Simeon, the Shepherds, or Anna. It continues today. There is so much to praise God for all God has done, is doing, and will do. So, as we begin another new year, I invite you to join in the song that never ends and will continue to go on and on, the song of Praise to God! Indeed, today and always "Glory to God in the Highest" and I will sing unto the Lord! Thank you, Lord, and because of you how can I keep from singing?

I pray you have a blessed start to the New Year, and I look forward to joining with you praising God as always interlinked in Christ. See you in worship in one way or another!

Pastor Zech Anderson

## Henri Nouwen Book Study Series

The second Nouwen book, **The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming**, will be a 3-part study in person/Zoom/recorded, January 2, 16, 30 @ 6:30 p.m. in the Immanuel Lounge.

The study will be led by Kathy McEnelly. The Nouwen books are available to order online in print or kindle version.

Anyone is welcome to join in on the discussion.

## Blessings & Prayers

### Baptisms

Dec. 5 Henry Jameson, son of Joe & Bethanie Farus

### Prayers

Susan Bartleson, Anthony & Misty Bartleson, Stephen Bartleson, and families, in the loss of husband/father, Thomas Bartleson of Boach, Missouri (formerly Forest City).

Roz & Jim Hemberger and family, in the loss of Roz's father, Walter 'Bud' Carlson of West Des Moines

## Treasury's Report | Immanuel Lutheran Church FY November 2021

	November Actual 2021	Monthly Budget	Year-to-date Actual	Annual Budget	Percent of YTD Budget 91.67%	November Actual 2020
<b>Income</b>						
Regular Offerings & Envelopes	36,473.69	40,990.75	388,110.40	491,889.00	78.90%	40,897.31
Other Income	4,208.12	9,014.00	92,926.89	108,168.00	85.91%	21,336.50
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>40,681.81</b>	<b>50,004.75</b>	<b>481,037.29</b>	<b>600,057.00</b>	<b>80.17%</b>	<b>62,233.81</b>
<b>Expense</b>						
Staff Support	30,403.08	32,830.33	353,896.93	393,964.00	89.83%	33,715.63
Administration	10,203.69	10,016.92	96,870.68	120,203.00	80.59%	11,422.38
Ministry Areas	5,882.31	7,157.50	84,760.88	85,890.00	98.69%	8,065.45
Loan re-payment/contingency	-10,000.00	0.00	-10,000.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>36,489.08</b>	<b>50,004.75</b>	<b>525,528.49</b>	<b>600,057.00</b>	<b>87.58%</b>	<b>53,203.46</b>

# Volunteer

## January 2022

### Assisting Ministers

Jan. 2.....	Ken Korth
Jan. 9.....	
Jan. 16.....	Cindi Lehmann
Jan. 23.....	
Jan. 30.....	Ann Hunhoff

### Scripture Readers

Jan. 2.....	Ray Beebe
Jan. 9.....	Sam Hernes
Jan. 16.....	Leah Boyd
Jan. 23.....	TBD
Jan. 30.....	David Readinger

### Altar Care

Jan. 2.....	Jeanette Neuman
Jan. 9.....	Joan Beebe
Jan. 16.....	Julie Damm
Jan. 23.....	Kathy Lewerke
Jan. 30.....	Marla Betz

### Communion Servers

Jan. 2	Kathy McEnelly, Becky Stumme, Mary Kingland
Jan. 16	Joan Beebe, Melanie Westerberg, Harlan Rodberg
Jan. 30	

### Sound/Video Techs

<b>Sunday</b>	Karl Wooldridge/Carson Strukel
<b>Wednesday</b>	Daryl Krieger/Tammy Krieger

### Offering Counters

Linda Holland, Mavis Hess, Darlene Carson, Marj Anderson, Ellen Olson

### Laundry

Marj Anderson

### Ushers

Beenken Family

### Sunday Coffee Fellowship

Kitchen Service Group

## Second in a series of Impact Stories of Immanuel members sharing their 'church story' interviewed and written by Waldorf student, Suyaishar (Sue).

David Damm, a lifelong member of the Immanuel Lutheran Church recalls his first memory of the church as a young kid sitting in church with his family, learning how to be quiet and appropriate.

"I remember how my mom was trying to keep us behaved and we wanted to be a little louder and crawling around and she was constantly telling us that we needed to be quiet," Damm said.

Since becoming a member of the congregation in 1955, Damm has served on the church council for five years, in which he served as the president of the congregation for three years and two as the secretary. He has taught Sunday School for a year and has been in the senior choir many years ago. In addition, he also published the Messenger for more than 20 years. His involvement does not stop there. He currently holds the position as the chair of the endowment committee.

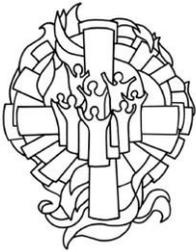
The role of faith and church has a strong ongoing presence in Damm's life. "It's such a grounding part of my life, my wife and I both feel that way," Damm said. "It just kind of permeates your life and it's just a part of everyday and so church attendance, prayer, it's just part of everything you do."

Damm added that being able to be with people in person before COVID for church services on Sunday mornings has impacted his life. "When I was in choir, on Wednesday nights on council for a while, you just kind of get a sense of being, a sense of community, a sense of belonging, so I think that's kind of a second family," Damm said.

Looking back on a time he felt the church had his back, Damm mentioned that it was when somebody in his family died and when his mother went through cancer for two years. "Both the pastors at the church at the time were very involved with our family, with visiting her and then obviously with the funeral service," he said. "Over a two-year period, my dad, my younger brother and my nephew died, and Pastor Rod was very instrumental and helping our family and being there for us and supporting us with what was a tough time to lose that many close people in a short period of time."

Damm believes that the primary role of the church is to be there for people, help guide them through their life journey, support them in times of celebration and in times of sadness. "Like I say, just to be a family where you can go to bounce things off of other people, to have a listening ear and get some comfort."





246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUEST



### MISSION STATEMENT

Building community in the  
Name and likeness of  
Jesus Christ.

### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays – 9:15am  
Wednesdays 6:30pm  
In Person & Livestream

### OFFICE SUMMER HOURS

M-F 8am – 5pm

## IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436

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Immanuel Lutheran Church

Immanuel Lutheran Church Library

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