

THE MESSENGER

The monthly newsletter for members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa January 2023

Immanuel's Congregational Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 5, 2023, 10:15am (or immediately following worship), online option will be available.

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

Business of the meeting will include voting on the proposed 2023 Budget, Voting on and installing new Council members, and ratify constitutional changes from 2022.

Budget Forum Scheduled

On Sunday January 22, 2023 your Church Council, Board of Trustees, and the Finance Committee members will host a budget forum following worship to present the 2023 proposed budget. Please pray for our church in regards to budgeting and finances. We want to be and strive to be excellent stewards of the gifts of God. We also strive for total transparency in and around financial matters. This is your church budget Church. Come with your questions, suggestions, and we will work through it together as we strive to please God in all we do.

Would you like to join the list of 'Scripture Readers' and share the Word of God at worship?

Jaci will be assigning the 2023 reader list in January and welcome any new additions. Your commitment would be for reading 2-3 times during the year. And Thank you to all our faithful current readers that will be included in the schedule unless you let her know differently.

HUNGER

MISSION EMPHASIS 2023 1st QUARTER

As we all are aware of the current economic conditions that can mean 'HUNGER' issues for many, Mission & Outreach is designating Immanuel's mission emphasis for January thru March for these 3 mission efforts that can help feed the hungry:

WORLD HUNGER

FOREST CITY NEIGHBORHOOD
FOOD BANK

WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEALS

Thank you for your continued mission support as we continue to remember these 'HUNGER' missions.

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

Summation: The days after Christmas can be a letdown. For weeks, sometimes months in advance, we prepare for the coming of our Christmas celebrations. We write Christmas lists, gather lists from others, go shopping for gifts, put up decorations, listen to seasonal music, plan elaborate meals, light candles on the Advent wreath and then the day comes and goes in 24 hours just like any other day. All that build-up for a brief time that swiftly joins the stream of history leave us with a sense of both fatigue and bewilderment. What comes next? Christian theologian and mystic, Howard Thurman, viewed the days after Christmas from a spiritual perspective and wrote this poem.

Letter from Pastor Rod

Show Up For The Team!

In the 2001 movie titled “Hardball” starring Keanu Reeves as Conor O’Neill, O’Neill finds himself in trouble with the law. As part of his probation, he is ordered to coach a little league team made up of kids from the housing projects. In the beginning he hates the gig, but throughout the season O’Neill learns from his players what true character and commitment is all about. Toward the end of the movie, just prior



to a championship game O’Neill’s team is in, he says, “I want you guys to take a good look at yourselves and feel proud. We made it here. We’re here. What I’ve learned from you is that really one of the most important things in life is showing up. I’m blown away by your ability to show up through everything that’s gone on. The league never wanted you to play this game, but you showed up.”

From the first time I saw this movie, this quote never left me. I think it’s because it relates so well to the church. The church is those who show up. As we begin a new calendar year together, I want to invite you all to take a good look at yourselves and feel proud. We’re here. We’ve made it to another year of ministry. One thing I have learned from ministering to people is, one of the most important things in life is showing up. I’m blown away by your ability to show up through everything that’s gone on and is going on in the world. There is no requirement to show up, to attend, or to participate, and yet, week after week, many of you continue to show up and build community in the name and likeness of Jesus Christ.

It is a new year. How will you show up to the church, to your siblings in Christ, to this community? My hope is that you will show up with your whole self: with your gifts and your needs. In this community, we not only expect people to give and share toward meeting our mission goals, but also to let us know your needs and care for you as best we can. You can show up in-person or on-line, but whatever you do – show up! As part of the church team, we know we mess up; we miss the mark; we are sinners who fall short. Yet, in Jesus, each day is a new day; an opportunity to begin anew.

In Philippians 2, Coach Paul gives us his motivational speech: “If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, 2 make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. 5 Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he

was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, 7 but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, 8 he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus showed up. Jesus showed up for you and for me and for all the world, to show us how to love and to be loved. That’s the kind of community in which I want to participate. I hope you do too. Together, as we show up, we will make this kind of community a reality.

A blessed 2023,

Pastor Rod

Immanuel Kids Always

We have just celebrated the birth of Jesus at Christmas. I pray that you all had a wonderful Christmas in which to give and receive presents, and love, and joy.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus who is God, in the flesh. I wonder what baby Jesus’ first word was. What would your guess be? Momma? Dadda? Stone? Water? It’s impossible to say because we are not told. What we are told is what Jesus’ last words were. In Matthew’s Gospel, the last words Jesus speaks are, “and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus didn’t just come for a visit like most kings, or presidents, or other dignitaries do. He came to make his home among us and within us. He came to stay. Jesus has a permanent residence on earth through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives in and among us to guide us, teach us, and direct our lives. Jesus also has a permanent home in your home, and in your heart. This is good news indeed. Jesus is here to stay. He will not leave you for any reason.

I don’t know what this new year holds for you or for myself. We always hope the new year will bring better things than the last, more money, more rest, less hurt and sorrow, but we just don’t know what will come. Whatever comes in 2023 we can be assured by Jesus last words, “and remember, I am with you always even to the end of the age.” Jesus, God in flesh and Spirit is with us ALWAYS, to help us, guide us, teach us, and bless us to be a blessing to others. Come to him in prayer; trust him with your hurts and sorrows; love him; and let Jesus love you and help you for he is with you always child of God.

Crossed in Christ,

Pastor Rod



~ 'Twas the Night
Before Christmas ~

Children's
Christmas Program
presented Dec. 11



Board notes

Mission & Outreach

Becky Stumme

The Mission & Outreach Board met via Zoom on Wednesday, December 14, at 4:45 p.m. All members were present and an opening prayer was given by Chad Kozitza.

The final amount received from the Thanksgiving meal freewill offering is still being determined. Proceeds from the meal will be divided equally between Missionary Karen Anderson and Wednesday night meals.

Our 2022 covenant commitment of \$5,000 to Missionary Karen Anderson has been met.

Thanksgiving net mission gifts include missionary Karen - \$788.40 and Wed. night meals - \$788.40.

\$310.00 was received from the No Bake, Bake Sale, \$239.05 was received from the December noisy offerings, and \$40.07 was received from the December 11 coffee hour. The recipes received from the No Bake, Bake Sale are now available on Immanuel's website. The members of the Mission & Outreach Board are truly thankful for the congregation's generosity in helping us to once again meet this commitment. Any additional money received in 2022 will be carried over to our 2023 covenant commitment. The Board will be recommending to Council that our covenant commitment to Missionary Karen Anderson remain at \$5,000 for 2023.

The mission emphasis for the first quarter in 2023 was discussed.

Because of the current economic conditions, the Board would like to focus on world hunger and local hunger (Forest City Foodbank and Wednesday night meals) during the first quarter. This recommendation will be presented to Council.

Jaci made another delivery of donated items to Megan Gabriell for the Waldorf international students. Thank you for your continued support of these students.

Board members were reminded that the purpose of mission and outreach is more than just seeking donations for money and items. It is also about taking the time to spread God's word and building relationships with others. Board members will be taking time to learn more about the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Magallanes in Chile and will be developing a plan on how to strengthen our relationship with the members of that church.

Trustees

Bink Keller

The Board of Trustees met on December 12, 2022 at the church. Income was \$43,004.33 and expenses were \$48,626.11 for a negative (\$5,621.78) for the month of November. YTD is a negative (\$43,330.74) compared to a negative (\$44,491.20) for 2021. Praying for a positive year end finish for 2022.

Endowment: Board approval to move unallocated 2022 funds to go towards Mission, Education and Intern needs to be used to the end of the year.

Property Committee: Mike Oleson is on medical leave for 6 to 8 weeks. In his absence, Dan Olson will do snow removal, Eric Kruger will be on call for electrical, Nelson Heating and Plumbing will be on call for Furnace issues. Dawn will take on up to 10 hours of additional cleaning in the sanctuary and church.

Personnel Committee: Elizabeth Bohl was hired for Children

Education.

New Business: The 2023 Proposed budget was reviewed with a 3% base salary increase.

Old Business: A) Bethany Lutheran Staff sharing and Quarterly vitality group update: Looking at replacing Jerry Appel.

B) Geno as worship and music leader for both church services is going well.

C) Teams have been put together for Connections Through Food grant. Still need 2 to spearhead.

Parish Council

Linda Ferjak

Council met on December 12, 2022 with an In Person/Zoom hybrid format. Eight members and both pastors were present. Meeting was called to order by President Daryl Krieger and November minutes were approved.

Board reports and Pastors reports were presented and approved. Council members introduced themselves to Elizabeth Carr, our new Intern.

Council reviewed the roster for council elections.

Business Financials were presented and can be found elsewhere in the Messenger. Council continued their re-engagement training with Nathan Swensen.

Parish Life

Karen Keller

The Board of Parish Life met via Zoom on Thursday, December 8, 2022.

Joyce reported on the Christmas Bags for the children for the Christmas Eve services. It was suggested that the Board of Education might be interested in doing the bags, so Joyce reached out to them. They are not interested in doing the bags, but they will be paying part of the expenses. Mary Kingland will order the apples for the bags. She also mentioned that Dollar General had lots of candy canes. It was decided that we will put the bags together at 1:00 on the 21st. Everyone who is available is encouraged to help.

We need to make more Welcome Gifts for visitors. It was decided that this will be done sometime in January.

Mary needs 3 more ushers for the second Christmas Eve service. We also need some people to hand out the Christmas Bags for the children. Ushers will need to pick up in the pews between the services and after the last service since Mike is on medical leave right now.

Melanie has communion servers scheduled through May.

Board of Ed

Tasha Banta

Board of Ed met on Tuesday, Dec. 6 with the focus completely on the upcoming Children's Christmas Program on Dec. 11 and the details of the Pie & Ice Cream Social held following the program.



Let It Rip!

So yes, I'm one of those people who was a kid in the 1990's. To some it seems like yesterday, to others, namely middle schoolers, they remind me it's ancient history. But one of the shows I watched was the Ninja Turtles, and they always seemed to have so many surfing phrases like Cowabunga and Totally Radical. One phrase that seems like something they would say is, Let it Rip. Which a lot of time means, here we go or let's go. But today as I write this I think of something ripping. Maybe it's because Christmas is only a couple days away and I can hear Zoey ripping the paper off of any gifts under the tree. But that ripping sound, I know you know it, is what I am hearing today.

In the church year, we usually celebrate the baptism of Jesus in January, it's usually the first thing after Christmas. And many of us may remember how John baptized Jesus and we see the water falling off of Jesus and the dove coming down, a beautiful image. But the image that always sticks to me is the image that lets it rip. Mark 1:10 says, "Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove." The heavens being torn up, ripped open. Do you hear the present being ripped open, maybe that's what it sounded like when the heavens were torn open. Jesus tears into our lives, God tears into the world and rips up the old and makes all things new. That's so unheard of, it just seems odd, what about the peaceful dove. God doesn't have time to gently come in, he tears in, rips in and makes himself known. That's the image that sticks with me.

As we begin a new year, rip up 2022 and rip open 2023, I pray you know God tears into your life and is with you always. Nothing ever again can separate us from the Love of Christ. It may feel sometime like our lives are being ripped apart, torn open by the state of the world. But now that the heavens are torn open, God isn't on the sidelines, he's very much in your life. That's a totally radical awesomeness promise dudes. So let it rip in the new year, and let Jesus rip into your life in new and exciting ways. What's the future hold? Only God knows but I'm ready to totally let him rip it up. Thanks Jesus!

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



Promiseland

Promiseland Families,

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Bohl and I can't wait to begin working more with the children here at Immanuel. I am a first grade teacher at Forest City Elementary School and this is my ninth year in the classroom. I have always had a passion for teaching and learning with children and I am excited to have the opportunity to do this in my church life as well!

My husband, Michael, and I moved to Forest City in 2016. We welcomed our son, Stanley, in 2018, and our daughter, Mary Kate, in 2021. You may have seen Stanley singing at the front

of the church and Mary Kate doing her best impression of singing from the pews.

I grew up in Boone, Iowa and was involved in church from a young age. My mom was the Director of Children's Ministry for many years and my parents and grandparents always taught Sunday School when I was growing up. My grandparents taught 3-year-old Sunday School for twenty years!

When Michael and I moved to town and started coming to church at Immanuel, we felt very welcome and comfortable here. We knew this is where we would want to raise our children and help them grow in their faith journeys and we feel so lucky to have such a supportive church family.

Elizabeth Bohl

Treasury's Report | Immanuel Lutheran Church FY November 2022

	November Actual 2022	Monthly Budget	Year-to-date Actual	Annual Budget	Percent of YTD Budget 91.67%	November Actual 2021	YTD Actual 2021
Income							
Regular Offerings & Envelopes	40,197.28	40,712.50	398,611.23	488,550.00	81.59%	36,473.69	388,110.40
Other Income	2,807.05	10,490.50	95,997.71	125,886.00	76.26%	4,208.12	92,926.89
Total Income	43,004.33	51,203.00	494,608.94	614,436.00	80.50%	40,681.81	481,037.29
Expense							
Staff Support	30,938.05	32,867.58	354,725.39	394,411.00	89.94%	30,403.08	353,896.93
Administration	11,329.29	11,152.67	114,312.20	133,832.00	85.41%	10,203.69	96,870.68
Ministry Areas	6,358.77	7,182.75	78,902.09	86,193.00	91.54%	5,882.31	84,760.88
Loan re-payment/contingency	0.00	0.00	(10,000.00)	0.00	0.00%	(10,000.00)	(10,000.00)
Total Expenses	48,626.11	51,203.00	537,939.68	614,436.00	87.55%	36,489.08	525,528.49
Income Less Expense	(\$5,621.78)	\$0.00	(\$43,330.74)	\$0.00		\$4,192.73	(\$44,491.20)

Volunteer

January 2023

Assisting Ministers

Jan. 1.....	Kathy McEnelly
Jan. 8.....	Olivia Banta
Jan. 15.....	Patti Strukel
Jan. 22.....	Ken Korth
Jan. 29.....	David Readinger

Scripture Readers

Jan. 1.....	Ray Beebe
Jan. 8.....	Connie Johnson
Jan. 15.....	Ellen Johnson
Jan. 22.....	Marla Betz
Jan. 29.....	Patti Strukel

Song Leaders

Jan. 1.....	TBD
Jan. 8.....	Mark & Joy Newcom
Jan. 15.....	TBD
Jan. 22.....	TBD
Jan. 29.....	TBD

Altar Care

Jan. 1.....	Julie Damm
Jan. 8.....	Joan Beebe
Jan. 15.....	Mary Lund
Jan. 22.....	Marla Betz
Jan. 29.....	Jean Yeager

Sound/Video Techs

Sunday	Andy Buffington/Nic Determann
Wednesday	Daryl & Tammy Krieger

Communion Servers

Jan. 1.....	Harlan Rodberg, Kathy McEnelly, Leah Boyd
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Ushers

Jan. 1.....	Tina Berg, Mary Kingland
Jan. 8.....	Chad, Marcy & Keaton Hanson
Jan. 15.....	Chad & Quincey Benson family
Jan. 22.....	Ben & Nikki Arentson family
Jan. 29.....	Chad & Quincey Benson family

Offering Counters

Ellen Olson, Jan Buffington, Linda Holland, Mavis Hess, Darlene Carson

Laundry

Jean Yeager

New Year - New You?



Elizabeth Carr

Beloved Siblings in Christ,
As the calendar turns to a new year many people start thinking about New Year's Resolutions. It has become a common practice to start the new year resolving to change things about our lives; lose weight, exercise more, eat less of the unhealthy stuff and more

healthy foods, be nicer to people, get organized, learn a new skill or hobby, save more money or spend less of it, quit smoking, spend more time with family and friends, travel more, read more... The list goes on and on, and whether we follow through on these resolutions or not, we at least recognize there is a need for change in our lives.

What areas of your life could use some change as we begin 2023, or more specifically, I ask you to consider what areas of your Spiritual Life could use some change? As my Spiritual Director begins our sessions together, "How is your relationship with God today?" Tending to our Spiritual health and wellbeing is just as important as tending to our physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Here are some examples of resolutions you could make to effect change in your Spiritual Life.

- Read one spiritual book per month
- Learn a new spiritual practice such as meditation, praying the labyrinth, or Lectio Divina
- Attend a retreat
- Start a prayer journal
- Commit to setting aside Sabbath time every week
- Find opportunities to volunteer, whether at church or in the surrounding community
- Begin a daily Bible study or devotion practice

Whether New Year's Resolutions are typically your practice or not, I invite you to take some time to examine your personal relationship with God and resolve to strengthen that relationship. We have knocked on God's door and it has been flung wide open; delicious smells, comforting warmth, and joyful music flooding over us and drawing us inside. All are welcome and there is a special place for you.

I pray that your relationship with the Triune God brings you continued comfort and joy in the new year and all the new years to come.

Blessings,

Intern Elizabeth

January 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Happy New Year! 9:15am - Worship, Communion 10:15am - Coffee, FH	2 Church Closed	3 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group, Zoom 5:30pm - Bell Choir	4 4-6pm - Meal, FH 5:30pm - Whirl Wed./ MS Youth/Adult Learning 6pm - Worship, communion 6:45pm - Choir 7:30pm - HS Youth Group	5 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge	6	7
8 9:15am - Worship, Communion 10:15am - Coffee, FH 10:30am - Promiseland	9 5pm - Trustees, Shalom 6:30pm - Council, Shalom	10 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group 4:30pm - Education board, kitchenette 5:30pm - Bell Choir	11 4-6pm - Meal, FH 4:45pm - M&O Board 5:30pm - Whirl Wed./ MS Youth/Adult Learning 6pm - Worship 6:45pm - Choir 7:30pm - HS Youth	12 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge 6:30pm - Good Grief Group, Shalom 6:30pm - Parish Life board, Lounge	13	14
15 9:15am - Worship, Communion 10:15am - Coffee, FH 10:30am - Promiseland	16 2-4pm - Prayer Shawl Ministry, Shalom Annual Reports Due	17 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group 5:30pm - Bells 6-8pm - Cub Scouts Pack mtg, FH	18 4-6pm - Meal, FH 5:30pm - Whirl Wed./ MS Youth/Adult Learning 6pm - Worship 6:45pm - Choir 7:30pm - HS Youth	19 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge 10am - Martha Circle, Shalom 10:30am - Good Sam Comm. 1:30pm - Rachel/Sarah Circles, (potluck leftover holiday treats) Lounge	20 FEBRUARY MESSENGER DEADLINE	21
22 9:15am - Worship 10:15am - Coffee, FH 10:30am - Promiseland 10:30am - Budget Forum, Shalom	23	24 1pm - LWR Quilting Do Day, FH 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group 5:30pm - Bells	25 4-6pm - Meal, FH 5:30pm - Whirl Wed./ MS Youth/Adult Learning 6pm - Worship, communion 6:45pm - Choir 7:30pm - HS Youth	26 9am -Women's Bible Study, Lounge 6:30pm - Good Grief Group, Shalom	27	28
29 9:15am - Worship, Communion 10:15am - Coffee, FH 10:30am - Promiseland	30	31 3:30pm - Intercessor Prayer Group 5:30pm - Bell Choir				

Blessings & Prayers

Prayers

Patty Spooner and family in the loss of her dad, David Doocy of Bancroft

JoAnn Bartleson, Gary & Jodene Bartleson, Marcy & Chad Hanson, Kristin & Brent Formanek, Becky & Ethan Miller, Lindsey & Adam Anderson, Adam & Kristina Bartleson, and families in the loss of dad/grandpa, Gisle "Doc" Bartleson of Forest City

Dick & Vera Hynes in the loss of Dick's sister, Pat Johnson of Mason City

Jerry & Dawn Craig in the loss of Jerry's dad, Jerry John Craig of Britt, formerly of Forest City.

Worship on the Radio

Sunday morning worship over KIOU 107.3 FM airs at 11am. We have many open dates in the next four months. Consider sponsoring a broadcast for \$100 of this important radio ministry.

Available dates:

Jan. 8	Feb. 5, 12
Mar. 12, 19, 26	Apr. 16
May 7, 14, 28	

Call or email the office to reserve a date (585-3152, jaci@immanuelfamily.com).

Menu

Wednesday
Meals

Come gather together with others for our FREE community meals offered every Wednesday serving 4-6 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Can't stay, or want to share a meal with a homebound, neighbor, or friend, takes outs available. Hoping everyone had a great holiday time and wishing a great 2023 year to all!
Dawn Craig, Hospitality Specialist

January Menu:

Jan. 4	Goulash, corn, cole slaw, peaches
Jan. 11	Pork loin, sweet potatoes, lettuce salad, apple crisp
Jan. 18	Grilled cheese, chips, baked beans, ice cream
Jan. 25	Pancakes, sausage, fruit cocktail



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 – 6:00pm
In Person & Livestream

Office Hours

M-F 8am - 5pm

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436

TELEPHONE

641-585-3152

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www.immanuelfamily.com

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Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Vice-President: **Dave Melby**

Treasurer: **Jen Jenkins**

Secretary: **Linda Ferjak**

Representatives: **Ben Arentson, Lisa Chisholm,
Marcy Hanson, Joyce Kasper, Chad Kozitza,
Danielle Niess, Laura Winter**