



The Manger

December 2022

Connecting Lives to Christ

The monthly newsletter of Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA

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About Us

Our purpose as a faith community is connecting lives to Christ, serving God and neighbor, and living our faith. We exist to connect people to Jesus, his message of hope and his saving love.

Because we believe that the power of God's love transforms us, Immanuel seeks to be a place that welcomes, nourishes and empowers all people to grow in faith. Join us each Sunday at 10 a.m. for worship.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT...a note from Your Pastor

The word **Advent** means coming or arrival. The very word hints at a hopeful, expectant anticipation. It is a time of waiting, but it is an active waiting. Therefore, we can also refer to it as a journey, a journey **home**. Echoing the traveling that Mary and Joseph must undergo in order to get to Bethlehem, Advent is a time of transition, a time of change, a time of learning how to hope again. As we celebrate this Advent, we too are on a journey of sorts. It is a journey of our hearts; a part of our faith walk to discern how the Good News will transform our lives. And just like any journey, there will be smooth and bumpy roads, folks along the way and signs that we are headed in the right direction.

More on why Advent is so important for Christians

A Savior had been promised to God's people for centuries. They longed and prayed for rescue. They hoped beyond hope that the Messiah would come. And then on the right day, in the right place, at the right time, Jesus was born.

All of us are waiting on something, many of us in times of transition. Sometimes we might wonder if God has forgotten us. Our prayer is that as we journey through this part of our life, as we experience this expectant yearning, this hopeful anticipation, that the promise of Christ coming into our lives will create such joy, such relief from burdens and rest for our weariness, such encouragement for our lives, that no matter what the travels bring, we will carry on with the Peace of Christ in our hearts. Advent is important because it teaches us how to have hope. While our society jumps right to Christmas, we practice a way of longing for God's promises that inspires love and mercy and grace in us.

Just because God hasn't come through (as far as you can see), it doesn't mean He has abandoned you. This very minute, His plan for our lives is working for his glory and our good. Though circumstances

FOOD FOR THOUGHT *continued...*

might seem otherwise, God is going to come through, on schedule, fulfilling His long-appointed plans for you. Don't give up before the time is right. While God rarely comes at **our** appointed time, He always comes at the right time. This is the joy and hope of Advent as we celebrate the promises of God being fulfilled.

May your Advent be filled with hopeful expectation at what God has done and continues to do in your life! Blessed Advent!

Journeying with you,

Pastor Chuck



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Community Connections is more than reading and discussing books that broaden our world view, and gently educate us. It is also looking at ways to connect with our Immanuel community, our Grand Ledge community and other communities that may be needing support, in a number of ways. This holiday season let's look at a couple you may want to consider reaching out and supporting.

***Ken's Coat Closet** would appreciate hats, gloves, and children's new socks and underwear. This might be an idea for your family, or co-workers to gather together, collect and deliver. Their hours are: Monday-Thursday from 10:30-2:30. Or email them at: kenscoatcloset@gmail.com

*We have supported Siren/Eaton Shelter in the past and this year you might consider:

Stuffing the Truck at Morrie's Grand Ledge Ford

Every year Morrie's invites our community to "Stuff the Truck" for the families at the shelter. They are asking the community to help them "Stuff the Truck" with unwrapped gifts and toys from now until December 16th. Other items that are always needed are: Winter Coats and Boots, Large size Baby Diapers, Wipes, Formula, Twin Size sheets and Blankets, and non-perishable food items. You can stop by their location during their working hours.

Baskets of Hope is an established way of supporting families, and this year they are not needing our financial support. So this year, let's make it a Merry and Giving Christmas for others as well.

Thank you and Merry Blessed Christmas to you and yours.

Blanche & The Community Connections Group



COUNCIL CORNER



Seasons' Greetings to All,

The holiday season has finally started! Seems like Halloween was such a long time ago. We made it through Thanksgiving, and Black Friday seemed to return to its pre-Covid madness. The madness I got to experience firsthand as I started the morning at The Home Depot and then finished my day working at Dunham's. Let me tell you it was a little nerve racking! But at the same time, it was nice to see life getting back to the "NEW" normal. It was nice to see craziness return.

It was a wonderful day today after the church service as we were able get back to the Hanging of the Greens inside the church. It was an incredible sight to see. Our church family has grown with the addition of families from other churches that have come to join us, not only for the holidays but to add and create a new larger church family for the years to come. I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who stayed and enjoyed the lunch that was provided by Pastor Chuck and Den Graber. I also want to thank the Landry's, the Ketola's, Smith's, and Gatewood's who have been a family group that knows where all the decorations are stored and always know where we set up the different trees and nativity scenes. Everyone is a blessing, but these families have lead the way for several years.

Once all of the presents have been opened and the last piece of wrapping paper has been put away, we will soon be headed into a new year. At our meeting earlier this month we were able to get our mission plan approved and in place for the new year. We are also welcoming three new members to the church council. I want to thank those whose time is ending on council: John Burg, Britt Riggs, and Sarah Larson. These three were very important to all of us during the Covid years. We will be welcoming Melissa Kingsley, Blanche Schaudt, and Cindy Smith, all of whom are welcomed with open arms, hearts, and minds as they bring new ideas and talents to council.

I will be in my last year of my term, and I would like to say what an honor it has been to serve our church over the last several years. I have learned a lot of things along the way, and I want to thank everyone who has been patient and understanding while we went through some very difficult times. I am excited that our future is so bright through the generosity of many families who are helping to expand our church's mission by reaching further into the community.

I hope everyone has a great holiday season. It will be incredible to celebrate the birth of our savior and then to usher in a new and exciting year. Blessings to all.

Thank You all for your support over the years.

Your Brother in Christ,

Scott



NEWS FROM the SERVING TEAM

Our November noisy offering for the **Lutheran Disaster Response** was \$47.23. Our December 11th noisy offering will be for the **Grand Ledge Food Bank**. Thanks for your support throughout the year to the noisy offerings as we reach out to these ministries.

Thanks also for your donations to the **Grand Ledge Emergency Assistance Program (GLEAP)**. GLEAP typically helps with food, prescriptions, medical needs, utilities, gasoline and housing assistance for families in need in the Grand Ledge area. Immanuel's recent donations to GLEAP will be mailed to them to assist with some of the needs this winter.

Baskets of Hope: Immanuel is participating in the Christmas Baskets for some of the families in need in the Grand Ledge area this Christmas. These families are identified through GLEAP. Because of your generous donations last year to this community outreach project it will not be necessary to donate funds to this ministry. We are however looking for volunteers to shop for these families in December or we may be providing a Meijer gift card to the families. The Serving Team has decided we should be able to assist ten families. Please consider shopping for these baskets and contact Jean Folk if interested at (517) 667-0383. The plan is that the contacts will be provided to us by December 6th so volunteers can shop for and deliver the baskets by December 21st. Thanks! Den Graeber



NEWS FROM THE KITCHEN UPDATE/REMODEL

The Kitchen Update/ Remodel Team started to meet again this year and continued to work on plans to update and remodel our church kitchen and the storage area off the kitchen. This is going to be a process in terms of the details and the steps involved and potentially the length of time to complete the project.

You are invited to a coffee hour following the worship service on December 11. *"Coffee and a Tour"* will include coffee and goodies and an opportunity for everyone to see the kitchen and the kitchen storage area which we hope to update and remodel. Team members will be present to communicate our vision and explain the need to update and remodel.

The February Congregational Meeting agenda will be including an approval for the architectural design expenditure which is necessary for contractors to bid on the project! Hope to see you there! We are also planning on a second *"Coffee and a Tour"* on Sunday, January 22. If anyone is interested in joining this team please talk to the team members sharing the vision at these special coffee hours! Thanks!

AROUND IMMANUEL

Notes from the Tellers

Just a reminder, if you make out your check or giving to special funds, they will not show on your year end giving statement. *Only* checks to Immanuel can go through our accounts. Checks made out to GLEAP or the Food Bank will be forwarded on to them. (On your check to Immanuel you can designate a special fund at the bottom.) There is a sign-up sheet for those requesting giving envelopes for 2023. Please put YES on your current envelopes and we will add you to the list. Thank You!

Fifth Friday Fellowship

Please join us at church for

Fifth Friday Fellowship

December 30th

Doors open at 6 pm, dinner starts at 6:30. Bring a dish to share and a white elephant gift in a brown bag (can be either a lunch sack or a grocery bag). After dinner we'll play an easy game to win or trade the gift.

My hope is to enjoy a good meal, each other's company and have some laughs on the fifth Friday of the month.

Thank you, Karen Ketola

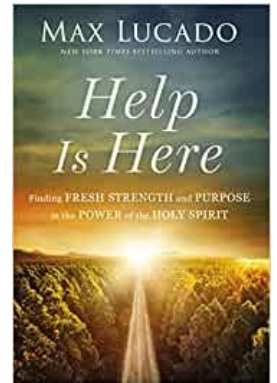


MEN, WANT TO READ A BOOK?

In mid-December, the men's group will begin "*Help Is Here*" by Max Lucado. We invite you to join in. The book is a biblical study of the Holy Spirit's work in us.

Men In the Morning meets Wednesdays at 7 a.m. either at Cracker Barrel or online by Zoom. We are a solid support group for our walk with Christ.

Contact Pastor Rick (627-6202) or Fred Koos (517-881-0644) so we can get you on our communication list.



Luther League II Luncheon

Monday, December 11th, 1pm

Cheddars on Saginaw in Lansing

Luther League II luncheons are open for those who would like to meet for lunch with our church friends. We usually meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at a local restaurant for food and fellowship. We order off the menu, so you can order what you like. We take up a small collection (usually \$1.00 apiece) after lunch to be used, at Christmas, for a charity of the groups choice.

There are many new faces in our congregation, as well as, those we haven't seen in a long time.

It would be fun to get acquainted and reacquainted. Look forward to seeing you. Please join us.

Please call Kristine Hernden, 517-712-7185 by Saturday 12/10, if you are interested or have questions.

Christmas at Immanuel

December 24th & 25th

Saturday Christmas Eve Kid Friendly Worship 4pm

Join us for a light and joy filled celebration of Jesus birth. This worship features a shortened worship for shorter attention spans, kid friendly songs and the Christmas story told in word and action.

Saturday Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Worship

Special pre-service music begins at 7pm, worship continues at 7:30pm.
Come witness a variety of musical gifts as we give praise to the newborn King!
Worship concludes with traditional candlelight and Silent Night.

Sunday Christmas Day Worship 10am

Worship with us on this great day of celebration as we praise God for the greatest gift ever given: the gift from heaven above! Scripture and hymns convey the message of joy on this wonderful day.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happy

1 Kim Oesterle
2 Aaron Boyers
2 Steve Colby
3 Mary Foerster
5 Emily Ketola
5 Lynn Colby
10 Carol Nama
10 Russ Oesterle
12 Britten Riggs
12 Jack Wolf
12 Melissa Kingsley


Birthday!

14 Kelly White
14 Sherrie Bryant
17 Carolyn Drown
18 Dale Stein
18 Jayden Roesch
20 Black Schneider
21 Nicole Sullenberger
26 Michelle Dinsmore
28 Sarah Gatewood
31 John Crambell

Happy Anniversary!

4 ~ Sandy & Bruce Hassan
9 ~ Marty & Gordie Woodman
18 ~ Cindy & Linn Smith
18 ~ Mary Jo and Dale Stein



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>If you have any questions related to upcoming events, please contact Trisha at the Church Office at 517.627.6310.</p> <p>Trisha Office Hours: Mon & Fri, 9a - 2p, T-Th via email: office@immanuel-gl.org or Pastor Chuck at 989.750.4573.</p>				1	2	3 AA Support Group 8am
4 First Fruits Offering Worship with Communion 10am	5 Sewl Sisters 11am-3pm Support Team 6:30pm	6	7 7am Men in the Community Book Read 10:30am Advent Service 7pm	8	9	10 AA Support Group 8am
11 Worship with Communion 10am Noisy Offering GL Food Bank "Coffee with a Tour"	12 Luther League Lunch 1pm	13	14 7am Men in the Morning Advent Service 7pm	15	16	17 AA Support Group 8am
18 Worship w/ Communion 10am	19 Sewl Sisters 11am-3pm Council Mtg 6:30pm	20	21 7am Men in the Morning Advent Service 7pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 4&7pm
25 Worship w/ Communion 10am 	26 Office Closed	27	28 7am Men in the Morning	29	30 5th Friday Fellowship 6:30pm	31