

Immanuel Informer

“Merry Christmas or Happy Holidays?”

For the past few years there has been a lot of angst and talk about whether it is right for people, businesses and organizations to wish people a Merry Christmas or simply a Happy Holidays. A lot of Christian people have staked out positions insisting on Merry Christmas instead of Happy Holidays. And in an era of “Political Correctness” there certainly is much to be said for speaking the truth in love. Certainly we should all wish to avoid the dreaded “X day”. Some companies are avoiding the whole issue by sending out Happy Thanksgiving Day cards and greetings and doing nothing else, except Happy New Years’ wishes.

I believe that there is a way for us to in a way turn the tables on people who are following the “politically correct” mantra of Happy Holidays. Most Dictionaries will list the definition of “Holy Day” as the second meaning of the word *holiday*. So when someone wishes you a Happy Holiday don’t get up in a snit and say it’s Christmas! Simply say: “Thank you for wishing me a happy *Holy Day*, I hope your day is also blessed.” It will take a bit of thought and practice to get in this habit, but it can certainly be illuminating and maybe even a conversation starter, to tell someone about the Baby Jesus, his life, death and resurrection.

As long as we are looking at the etymology of words, we should consider the word *Christmas*. My Theological Dictionary says that this is an Old English word *Christes mass*, meaning the Church festival marking the birth of Jesus Christ. My regular dictionary gives it basically the same meaning and says *Christ’s festival*. As I think about this, it strikes me that this celebration is designed for the Church. In reality Jesus’ birthday party is to be held at church. Jesus invites us to come and celebrate his birthday in his house, where he is not only the host but is also the meal, when he offers us his body and his blood. Yet it seems like many people turn down Jesus’ invitation and decide to try and have his party somewhere else. I would hope that as we all make our plans this Christmas that we will come to Jesus’ house and celebrate his birthday with him.

Christmas Eve at 11 pm Candlelight Service and Christmas Day at 10am.



Merry Christmas and Happy Holy Day!

Pastor Ted

“Overjoyed by the Star”

In Matthew 2, we read about the Visit of the Magi. Following the star, inquiring at the king’s palace, informed by the priests where to find the Child, they trudged with determination to Bethlehem, bringing with them the gifts they planned to present as they worshiped Him.

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and incense and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:10-11).

What did the Wise Men from the East know about this Baby or His family? Not much, so they came to Jerusalem to ask a king about the King, *He Who has been born king of the Jews.* Yet they came to faith, bringing gifts with them to honor Him. How far did they travel? How long was their trip? We can surmise, but what’s important to know is that, for them, the trip with all its drudgery was worth it. *“They were overjoyed.”*

How long a trip are we prepared to make this Christmas to worship the Christ Child? Are we willing to put up with inconvenience and sacrifice in order that we might come before Him with our gifts, offering them in faith, as the Wise Men did?

What causes our joy this Christmas season? Is it seeing the eyes of little children light up when they open their presents? That’s good. Is it finding exactly the right gift for someone special? That’s good, too. But are we *“overjoyed”* when we see the star? Contrary to the messages we hear in the commercials and even the seasonal songs, the only thing Christmas is about is the birth of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

Along with doing all the wonderful things that are good to do at this time of the year, including the visiting of those who are sick and the lonely, the baking of goodies for food banks, the sharing of financial resources with those in need, and all the shopping and caroling and everything else, let’s find our joy in seeing the star. That star points us to Jesus and leads us to the Cross. Let us *“open our treasures”* and worship Him with our best and most precious gifts as the Wise Men did.



Financial News and Notes

We are so thankful to all of you who have made a 10-10-10 commitment. This effort has improved our financial condition and has allowed us to be almost current with our bills the past month. We can only praise God for your commitment and generosity.

We also want to thank everyone who in any way participated in the Dinner Auction, as a donor, attendee and a bidder. You saw the good news that we cleared \$5,540 which was split equally between the Church and the Parent Teacher League of the school. As for the Church this allows the Men's Club who worked on the Dinner Auction to give Deaconess Lori Wilbur \$1000 for her ministry at Statesville Prison. (We are inviting Lori to join us soon to receive the check.) The remainder allowed us to provide the deposit that Commonwealth Edison has insisted we give them. Without this great response we would not have been able to do this. Thank You and May God Bless.

We pray that as you consider the Christmas Season and the end of the Year that you will consider a special offering to the work of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

10-10-10

If you began your commitment on October 10th, you will complete this devotion in mid-December. Why not continue what you have started? On the 19th we will have our Special Service of Lessons and Carols and who would want to miss that? This is followed later that week with Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and the first Sunday after Christmas all opportunities to come and worship. You can take the prayers and start over again with the first week and cycle through them another week. (Copies of all ten prayers will be in the narthex) Please include in your prayers the preparation for the next steps of 10-10-10 as Pastor and others begin the training and studying. And then why not continue your commitment with your offerings? The Lord invites us to bring in the full tithe. We know that many of our shut-ins have been praying with us and are encouraged by the prayers. So let's keep on keeping on!

MONTHLY EVENTS (unless otherwise noted)

- Sunday School classes on Sundays at 8:30 AM
- Adult Bible Study on Sundays at 8:30 AM
- Adult Bible Study on Wednesdays 10:30 AM
- Self-Defense classes Mondays at 6:00 PM
- Confirmation classes Wednesdays at 6:30 PM
- Darts Tuesdays at 8:00 PM
- Adult Choir Rehearsals Wednesdays at 7:30 PM
- Men’s Club every second Saturday of the month 8:00 AM
- Prayer Shawl Group every first Thursday of the month 7:00 PM

Prayer Shawl Group

The Prayer Shawl Group will be meeting on **Thursday, December 2nd** at 7:00 PM at the Old School House (4733 Cermak Rd. - behind the Verizon store). The next project will be discussed. See Patricia Contraveos if you have any questions.

FOR THE RECORD

**New Members -
Chris & Katy Thomas**

**Baptism -
Rashaad Smith - November 24**



Everything written in the Scriptures was written to teach us, in order that we might have hope through the patience and encouragement which the Scriptures give us.

Romans 15:4

Getting the Most Out of Your Daily Bible Reading

As you read the Bible each day, allow the Scriptures to speak to you. This daily “dialogue “ between you and the biblical text will reveal new understandings about God, and about yourself.

- **Set aside time** to read the Bible on a daily basis.
- **Find a quiet place** to read and reflect on each day’s reading
- **Begin with prayer**, asking God for guidance and blessing.

**Believe the Good News
And Share God’s Love**

DECEMBER

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 - Nehemiah 8:1-12 | |
| 2 - Amos 9:11-15 | Fourth Sunday in Advent |
| 3 - Zephaniah 3:14-20 | |
| 4 - Zechariah 9:9-17 | 19 - Luke 1:1-15 |
| | 20 - Luke 1:26-38 |
| Second Sunday in Advent | 21 - Luke 1:39-56 |
| 5 - Mark 1:1-15 | 22 - Luke 1:57-66 |
| 6 - Psalm 97 | 23 - Luke 1:67-80 |
| 7 - Psalm 126 | 24 - Luke 2:1-20 |
| 8 - Isaiah 11:1-9 | Christmas Day |
| 9 - Isaiah 60:1-7 | 25 - John 1:1-18 |
| 10 - Isaiah 60:8-16 | |
| 11 - Isaiah 60:17-22 | 26 - Acts 7:54-60 |
| Third Sunday in Advent | 27 - Hebrews 1:1-14 |
| 12 - Isaiah 61:1-11 | 28 - Hebrews 2:1-18 |
| 13 - Jeremiah 33:1-13 | 29 - Hebrews 12:1-13 |
| 14 - Jeremiah 33:14-26 | 30 - Hebrews 12:14-29 |
| 15 - 2 Samuel 7:1-17 | 31 - Hebrews 13:1-21 |
| 16 - 2 Samuel 7:18-29 | |
| 17 - Psalm 89:1-18 | |
| 18 - Psalm 89:19-37 | |



Midweek Advent Services - When Angels Speak - People Listen

These services are at 7:00 PM at the Old School House

December 1st - The Angel Speaks to Zechariah

December 8th - The Angel Speaks to Mary

December 15th - The Angel Speaks to Joseph

The Series concludes on Christmas Eve when the Angel speaks to the Shepherds



CONGRATULATIONS.....to the winners of the Lions Club International Peace Poster Contest –

1st place – Kyla Clark (8th grade)

2nd place – Arielle Reese (7th grade)

Kyla receives a \$100 savings bond and Arielle receives a \$50 savings bond.

IMMANUEL HONOR ROLL - FIRST TRIMESTER

The following students were placed on the Honor Roll for the first trimester - Joshua Coleman, Amber Reese, Arielle Reese, Kyla Clark and Shana Nelson. Students in grades 5-8 are eligible if they obtain a GPA 3.0 or higher. Congratulations!



Poinsettia plants will be part of the chancel decorations for Christmas at Immanuel. If you would like to make a plant purchase, special order forms are available. **Orders and payments must be made before December 12th.** The 6.5" foil covered plants are \$12.50 each. Checks should be made payable to **Immanuel Lutheran Altar Guild**. The plants can be picked up immediately after the Christmas Day service or after the Sunday, December 26th service. If you have questions, contact Barb Arndt at 630.655.0797.

Immanuel Lutheran School News

NO SCHOOL - CHRISTMAS BREAK

December 20th through January 2nd.

Classes resume on Monday, January 3, 2011



Immanuel Lutheran School sponsored a Christmas Tree at Brookfield Zoo during "Holiday Magic". The

Immanuel Christmas Tree will be #349 and it will be located in the West Mall. Ask Guest Services for the correct location.

IMMANUEL CHURCH MEMBERS - Aissa Perez and Brett Willis both received Honorable Mention for the first quarter at Walther Lutheran H.S. maintaining a 3.01-3.50 GPA. Congratulations!

Children's Christmas Program "JOY TO YOU AND ME!"
Sunday, December 19 4:00 PM
 The program will be held in church. Everyone is invited to attend. Family, friends, & neighbors are welcome!



"Annual Food Drive"

Collections for our food drive will be until Christmas. There will be a drop off box in the Narthex as well as at the school entrance. Items to donate include: all canned goods, noodles, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, rice, etc. Thank you in advance for your support.



December Birthdays

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 3 - Lizette Lepe | 18 - Maxine Mannella |
| 7 - Sarah Blair | 21 - Mia Railing |
| 8 - Susan Mazanek | 24 - Zachary Redis |
| 9 - Zachary Blair | 26 - Paul Gerches |
| 10 - Karen Bimler | 26 - Corinne Hein |
| 11 - Lance Turner | 30 - Marvin Sahs |
| 12 - Alana Sanders | |
| 13 - Rita Stallings | |
| 17 - Tim Bell | |



IMPORTANT DATES

- 2 - Vision & Hearing Testing
- 7 - 6:30 PM PTL Meeting
- 8 - 3:00 PM Cooking Club
- 13 - Manna orders due
- 14- PTL Christmas Store
- 15 - Vision & Hearing re-screening
- 17 - Classroom parties
- 19 - 4:00 PM Children's Christmas Program
- 20 - 31 - NO SCHOOL
- 24 - 10:00 PM Candlelight Service
- 25 - 10:00 AM Christmas Day Service

From the Principal's Desk

By now, I am sure you have heard that the second Immanuel Lutheran Church and School's Dinner/Auction was a huge success! The profits will go a long way in helping to meet the needs of the church and school.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the individuals and companies that donated items for the auction. Listed below are the donors in no particular order:

Mike & Carol Northcutt	Marilyn Weeks	Stimac's Restaurant
Brookfield Zoo	Chicago Cubs	Chicago White Sox
Eden Bowling Lanes & Grill	Q's Restaurant	Shedd Aquarium
Chicago Wolves	Ron & Barb Arndt	John Kyanka
Milton A. Svec Associates	Randy & Michelle Weeks	Family Christian Bookstores/Lombard
Margo Heald	Jody Page	H & R Block
Dominicks	Grades PK & K	Grades 7 & 8
Windy City Thunderbolts Baseball	Mother's Day Restaurant	Chrysanthy's Salon & Spa
Garnet Misk-Broadway Hair Salon	Chris Nendick	Celar Chiropractic
Prima La Pizza	Ron & Lana Hahn	Rizzi Florist
Kane County Cougars	Keith & Dorothy Francis	Becky & Bob Lelingis
Grades 5 & 6	Steve Batchelor/Waste Mgmt	Embassy Suites/Lombard
Gregg Hassler/Waste Mgmt	Neal & LaDonna Tolefree	Magi Quest/Yorktown
Amazing Chicago/Navy Pier	Jimmy Johns	Nancy Gizel
Grades 1 & 2	Grades 3 & 4	Clarence Urban
Barb & Bob Brown	Chicago Bears	Karen & Ed Mulvihill
Cat Nap Group	Immanuel PTL	Barbara Stern
Signature Creations/Jean Quentiere	Fred & Dorothy Boettcher	Paul's Pizza
Pastor Ted & Becky Vratny	Debbie & Wayne Valentino	Cheesecake Factory
Spring Hill Suites/Warrenville	Debra & Carone Pierce	Harry "Chip" Brown
Albano's Deli	Alpine Banquet Haus	Bruce Horek
Rob Debeau	Dan Nelson	

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who pitched in to help with the event—PTL, Men's Club, and the planning committee. Here's to a job well done!

I hope to see you at the third annual dinner auction in 2011!

In Christ,
Lana J. Hahn



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RETURN REQUESTED

POSTMASTER: DATED MATERIAL

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Lana Hahn, M.A., Principal
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Donn Hempel, B.A., Director of Music
Office: 708-562-5580 ext.205

Carol Northcutt, Admin. Asst.
Carol@immanuel-hillside.org

REMEMBER TO PRAY. . . . If you have a prayer request, please call the pastor in the church office (708-562-5590) . We are praying for you! Please notify the office when circumstances of your request change or when the Lord answers our prayers. We want to rejoice with you and thank the Lord.



ACOLYTE SCHEDULE



December 5 -
9:30 AM - Christopher Swasko

December 12 -
9:30 AM - Mia Railing

December 19 -
9:30 AM - Zachary Redis

December 24 - Candlelight Service
11:00 PM - Joshua DuBois and Selena
Perez

December 25 - Christmas Day
10:00 AM - Sebastian Manilla

December 26 -
9:30 AM - Mia Railing