IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Glorifying God. Impacting the Community.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Informer Volume 18 Issue 5 December, 2022

Rejoice Exceedingly

This is the Christmas season, and, a small but important part of Jesus' birth is the visit of the wise men. Their visit is recorded in the second chapter of Matthew's Gospel. 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 rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered Him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh"* (Matthew 2:10-11).

What did the wise men from the East know about this Baby or His family? Not much. Yet they came in 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 rejoiced exceedingly with great joy"*

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 do we rejoice exceedingly when we see the star? Contrary to the messages we hear in the commercials and even the seasonal songs, the entire focus for Christmas should be 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 visiting the sick and the shut-in, baking goodies for food banks, sharing 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. May God grant us the same determination and faith that the wise men had when they traveled to honor Jesus. Let us open our treasures and worship Him with our best and most precious gifts as the Wise Men did.

As the Star of Bethlehem guided the wise men, may the light that is the Light of the world guide our thoughts, words, and actions. Merry Christmas!

December Birthdays

03 - Maya Lepe
03 - Lizette Pena
07 - Sarah Blair
07 - Jordyn Hunt - 4th Gr.
08 - Susan Mazanek
08 - Carlton Davis - 5th Gr.
09 - Zachary Blair
10 - Karen Bimler
11 - Lance Turner
13 - Rita Stallings
14 - Brooklyn Gerard, 2nd Gr.
14 - Cameron Kelley, kdg.
14 - Cloe Lewis, 6th Gr.
15 Garren Johnson, Kdg.
16 - Jayne Siou
18 - Maxine Mannella
19 - Arabella Youhas - 2nd Gr.
20 - Jordyn Allen - 7th Gr.
20 - Eva Caldwell - Prek.
20 - Miciah Hiner - 2nd Gr.
21 - Mia Railing
24 - Zachary Redis
26 - Corinne Hein
26 - Evin Thurman - Prek.
29 - Jaycion Ruffin - 1st Gr.

Holiday Save the Dates:

December 8
Traditions of Christmas

December 10
The Chosen Movie Night

December 11
School Christmas Program

December 18
Lessons & Carols
Cookie Walk, Chili & Caroling

December 23
Holiday Food Pantry

ENJOY GOD'S GENEROSITY TO YOU THEN SHARE IT WITH OTHERS.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Galatians 6:10

Prepare the Way of the Lord

John the Baptist was the one calling in the desert, *"Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight"* (Matthew 3:3), and so again, during Advent, we focus on the birth of Christ and heed the Baptist's admonition to prepare our hearts for Him.

David, the psalmist, also urges us to prepare for the Lord's coming. *"Lift up your heads, O gates…that the King of glory may come in"* (Psalm 24:7). Think about how a nation prepares for the visit of a foreign dignitary. The red carpet is rolled out; the security forces are on high alert; the media is present to capture the moment with cameras and recorders; and plans long in the making begin to unfold.

But we're not welcoming an earthly guest. No earthly visitor can compare to this Guest for whom we prepare. *"Who is this King of glory?"* the psalmist asks and then answers, *"The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle!"* Again, he urges, *"Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in."* Psalm 24:8-12

This King has left the glories of Heaven for the squalors of Earth in order to make us His own. He lived the perfect life in our place. He endured rejection, scorn, and humiliation, culminating in His death and resurrection so that we can be accepted by our holy God, so that we can be lifted up to Heaven, so that we will never have to die but will live forever in Heaven with Him.

This is the Christmas message. Yes, we picture a helpless baby in a manger, but that Baby is the King of glory Whom we worship and strive to make known to the world.

May God help us all share the good news of great joy!

Mary, a young woman, learns from the Angel Gabriel that she is going to be the mother of the Messiah for Whom she and her people had waited so long. How did she prepare? Do we read about her gathering clothes and diapers and blankets? Did she even ask Joseph to build a cradle or a crib for the Child on His way? What we do read about is Mary's visit with her cousin Elizabeth and their great rejoicing in God over what He was about to do through them. What's more important to you during this Advent season – outward preparations or the preparing of your heart to receive the Christ Child?

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem…wise men from the east came to Jerusalem saying, 'Where is He Who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him' " (Matthew 2:1-2). They had been watching and waiting, and, when the time came, they knew what was happening and they were ready. We have the Scriptures that tell us about not only the birth of the Christ Child, but about His Second Coming as well. While we watch and wait, let's be busy using the gifts God has given us to share God's Word so that all, like the wise men (Magi), will be ready when He comes.

From the Principal's Desk - Traditions of Christmas

Traditions are the passing on of customs and beliefs from one generation to another. Those customs and beliefs can be passed on by word of mouth or by example. The holidays are filled with many traditions. Christmas in particular, is filled with quite a few. The traditions range from the foods that are eaten to the types of decorations used to when presents are opened. There are traditional songs, traditional colors, and even traditional movies. Traditions may vary from family to family and culture to culture, but the traditions are still there.

Traditions tend to give us a sense of comfort and a sense of peace. They are something that we can rely on or fall back on to keep us calm in a world that is sometimes filled with much chaos. Traditions can also bring us happiness and joy and fill us with light, especially at a time of year where darkness seems to prevail.

Because changes in our world, in society, and in our lives occur, there may also be changes in traditions. New generations and new families create new traditions. However, the traditions continue. But there is one tradition that never changes. In fact, it's not really a tradition, it's a feeling. And that feeling is love. Love is expressed at many a holiday and most especially at Christmas.

The greatest expression of love was in the perfect gift that was given to us all. That expression of love is what led to so many of the traditions we do share. We sing so many songs that honor and praise and show love about the wondrous birth of Jesus. We decorate with lights to remind us of the true Light sent to take away the darkness of sin. We share in gift-giving to recreate and represent how we were given the greatest gift of all.

God loved us so much that He gave His only Son to us. It was a perfect expression of love in a most precious and perfect gift. As you take time to share in your traditions of Christmas, take time to remember why we have those traditions. Set aside time to remember God's expression of love to us. Blessings to you as you spend time with family and friends and as you gather to celebrate and share in your traditions.

May you have a wondrous and joyous Christmas!

Valerie Winston

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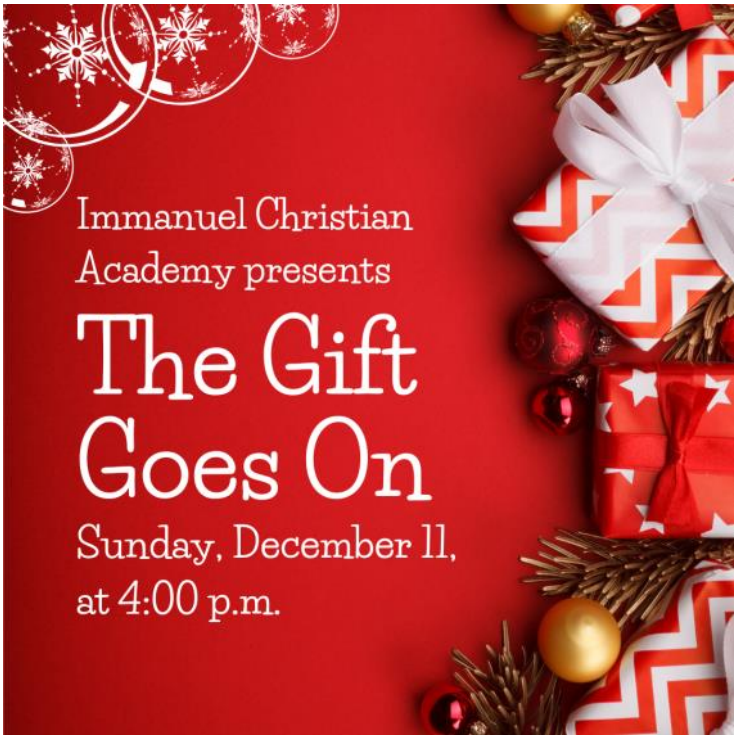
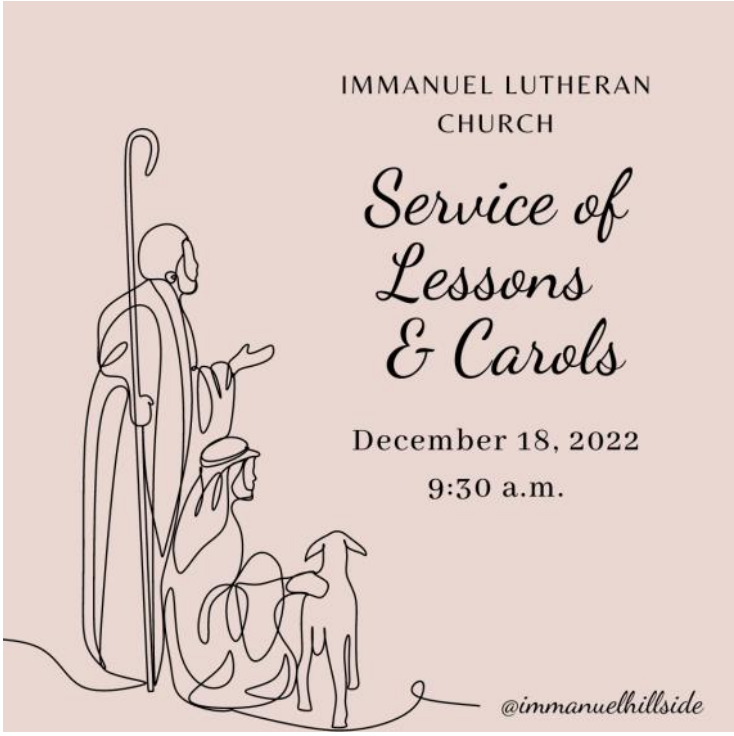
Choose Immanuel when shopping at
Amazon this Christmas Season.

Holiday Events

Join us each week for Sunday services at 9:30am too!

Will take place in the school.





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 11th. The plants are $15.50 each. Checks should be made payable to **Immanuel Altar Guild**. The plants can be picked up immediately after the Christmas Day service. If you have any questions, contact Barb Arndt at 1-630-655-0797.

Join us after church on December 18th for a day of festive fun, caroling and food!

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 gives.
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.

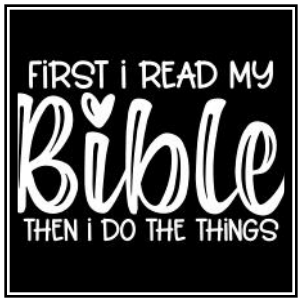
Daily Bible Readings

1 Isaiah 7:10-8:8
2 Isaiah 8:9-9:7
3 Isaiah 9:8-10:11
Second Sunday in Advent
4 Isaiah 10:12-27a, 33-34
5 Isaiah 11:1-12:6
6 Isaiah 14:1-23
7 Isaiah 24:1-13
8 Isaiah 24:14-25:12
9 isaiah 26:1-19
10 Isaiah 26:20-27:13
Third Sunday in Advent
11 Isaiah 28:14-29
12 Isaiah 29:1-14
13 Isaiah 29:15-30:14
14 isaiah 30:15-26
15 Isaiah 30:27-31:9
16 Isaiah 32:1-20
17 Isaiah 33:1-24
Fourth Sunday in Advent
18 Isaiah 34:1-2, 8-35:10
19 Isaiah 40:1-17
20 Isaiah 40:18-41:10
21 Isaiah 42:1-25
22 Isaiah 43:1-24
23 Isaiah 43:25-44:20
Christmas Eve
24 Isaiah 44:21-45:13, 20-25
Christmas Day
25 Matthew 1:1-17
26 Matthew 1:18-25
27 Matthew 2:1-12
28 Matthew 2:13-23
29 Luke 1:1-25
30 Luke 1:26-38
31 Luke 1:39:56

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.



Updates & Reports

Private & Online Donations: $ 50.00
HOLIDAY FOOD & FUND DRIVE: $1,801.00
Pending Grant Applications: (2) 1 new grant written this month - Batterman Foundation

PYHT Food Distributions & Activity:

In-Kind Food Donations Received: Costco, EYFP, Michael Lewis Co., Sysco, Norman Distribution, Frito Lay.
Saturday Pantry - 11/12 Families Served: 96 / 11/12 Individuals Served: 352
Thanksgiving Distribution 11/22: 105 Families 420 Individuals / Friday Pantry: Families (until 11/18) 51

Food Relief Agencies & Ministries Served: Westchester Food Pantry, Lyons Church, St. Paul-Oak Lawn, BEDS Plus-LaGrange, Elmhurst Food Pantry, Leyden Township FP, Elmwood Park Panty, Village of Hillside, Housing Forward, Quinn Center-Maywood, Project 22:9, Immanuel DesPlaines, Immanuel-Bartlett, Trinity Burbank, Lombard FP, St. Matthew's Soup Kitchen, Salam Christian Fellowship.

Volunteer Stipends Paid Out: $200 +$50 Grocery Gift Card

On Wednesday, November 9 Jayne Siou was invited to St. John's Lutheran Church & School-Mayfair Chicago to speak about our Food Ministry during their Chapel Service. Students there are holding a food & fund drive for our Holiday Food Distributions. We are returning on December 2nd to pick up donations.

Here at Immanuel, students have designated November & December chapel funds to PYHT. It is a blessing to see so many attentive and eager students willing to be servants in Christ here at Immanuel and at St. John's.

Project 22:9, An outreach ministry of the Franciscan Brothers/Catholic Charities has partnered with us this month to pickup and deliver 35 pallets/840 cases of United Airlines 1st class Amenity kits that were donated to PYHT from Michael Lewis Co. Homeless shelters, soup kitchens, Salvation Army, and local churches received the much-needed gifts as well as our own pantry patrons and congregation.

Vide Y Fe Church-West Dundee will be working with Jayne to establish a Food Pantry for their Hispanic Ministry and community, starting a "Satellite" PYHT Food Outreach, including grant writing.

NEWS: Just Announced! Batterman Family Foundation Grant Award of $50,000 to be used towards the new Food Pantry Building. Thanks be to God for this generous contribution!

HOLIDAY FOOD & FUND DRIVE-*UPDATED*:
$ 1,801.00 Raised so far! We have $ 1,199 left to reach our goal of $3,000 by Sunday, December 18

December 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			30 6pm Potluck Supper 7pm Advent Worship Service 7:30 pm Adult Choir	1 - 3pm Basketball Practice	2 7:00 p.m. Adult Volleyball	3
4 - Scrip Due 9:30am Worship 10:30am Fellowship 11:15am Bible Study	5 4:00pm HOME Basketball Game	6	7 - 8:15 Chapel 6pm Supper hosted by Altar Guild 7pm Advent Worship Service 7:30 pm Adult Choir	8 - 3pm Basketball Practice 6pm - Traditions of Christmas	9	10 11am Food Pantry 5pm - Movie Night The Chosen
11 - 9:30am Worship *Special Voters Mtg* 10:30am Fellowship 11:15 Bible Study 4pm Children's Program	12 - Scrip Due	13 4:00pm HOME Basketball Game	14 - 8:15 Chapel 6pm Potluck Supper 7pm Advent Worship Service 7:30 pm Adult Choir	15 4:00pm AWAY Basketball Game	16 PTL Christmas Store 7:00 p.m. Adult Volleyball	17
18 - 9:30am Service of Lessons & Carols followed by Fellowship, Cookie Walk, Caroling to Shut-ins	19 - No School	20 - No School	21 - No School 7:30 pm Adult Choir	22 - No School	23 - No School 11am Food Pantry	24 - Christmas Eve 9pm Candlelight Service
25 - Christmas Day 10:00am Worship 10:30am Coffee	26 - No School	27 - No School	28 - No School	29 - No School	30 - No School	31

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RETURN REQUESTED

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