

## 2023 IMMANUEL STAFF AND COUNCIL

### Staff

Lead Pastor.....Nate Loer  
 Youth & Family  
 Spiritual Gifts Coordinator.....Elana Seibert  
 Administrative Secretary.....Tracy Church  
 Custodian.....Ellen & Doug Carlstrom  
 Bookkeeper.....Jil Fiemeyer  
 Choir Director.....Deb Haraldson

### Council

President.....Jennifer Brunsberg  
 Vice President.....Mike Brunsberg  
 Secretary.....Meagan Ferris  
 Treasurer.....Jena Osberg  
 Financial Secretary.....Gail Klunenberg  
 Financial Vice-Secretary.....Sue Johnson  
 Congregational Life.....Peggy Larson  
 Education.....vacant  
 Finance.....Bryan Greenwaldt  
 Outreach.....Rick Johnson  
 Property Management.....Sam Sundby  
 Worship and Music.....Pam Nelson  
 Youth.....Sara Ross

Immanuel Lutheran Church Office 218-631-2738



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 403 SE 2ND ST  
 PO BOX 69  
 WADENA, MN 56482

# Immanuel Lutheran News

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA  
 403 2ND ST SE—PO BOX 69  
 WADENA, MINNESOTA 56482



*Called and united through the Gospel of  
 Jesus Christ, our mission is to proclaim  
 and respond to God's presence among us.*

December 2023



### From the Desk of Pastor Nate...

Advent greetings to you all in the name of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

The Gospel reading for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent (December 10) is Mark 1:1-8, which begins: "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

Right away, Mark tells us all about this Gospel he is sharing with us. It's the story of Jesus, God's anointed (that what "Christ means), the very Son of God. From now until November 2024, we will be hearing readings from Mark (with plenty of John's gospel mixed in, too!) that will remind us again of the identity and purpose of Jesus and His universe-altering ministry.

This is exactly the one we need to come among us. Not a mere teacher. Not a mere prophet. Not merely a kind person with great ideas on how to better love and serve our neighbors. God's anointed. God's one and only Son.

The darkness of this time of year is a perfect metaphor for the darkness of our lives and our world. Chaos. War. Division. Struggle. Illness. Death. I look around and see all kinds of problems that make me feel sad, anxious, worried, and unsettled ... and vulnerable. And as a pastor, I spend a lot of time in prayerful conversation with others who feel the same way.

But Christ Jesus – Son of God – comes to us to save us from this present sin and darkness. And so, we adorn our sanctuary with something more than trees and nativity scenes during this season of Advent. We adorn it with blue, the color of hope, and tell ourselves again and again that Christ – not merely Christmas – is coming soon. Coming to save us from ourselves, from our troubles, from our death. And take us to be with Him and the Father forever. To a place with no more tears, no more suffering, no more death. I can hardly wait.

And so, we mark time in this season with candles, music, and readings about hope from scripture. But we will engage in other hopeful rituals, too. The giving tree, the Children's Christmas program, Choir Sunday, the seasonal decorating and more. I love these traditions of music, giving, and adornment, because they are hallmarks of a season in which we hope together and celebrate Christmas' and Christ's impending arrival. May your own preparations for Christ and Christmas be full of blessedness and joy.

Humbly in Christ.

Pastor Nate

Pastor Nate

The church office will be closed the following days:

Monday, December 25

Tuesday, December 26

Monday, January 1



The council met on Sunday, November 12, 2023. Vice President Mike Brunsberg called the meeting to order.

**Congregational Life:** *Peggy Larson— Did not meet.*

Wednesday night meals are going great. The Halloween meal was well attended and appreciated. We served about 125. Thank you to Sara Grabe and Elana for organizing this event. If we do this next year it is recommended we start serving at the same time as trick or treating. Work continues on the Congregational Christmas event on December 3rd. We will be having a potluck after church followed by craft activities. Looking forward to planning other congregational activities this winter. Contacting Sam Sundby to get an estimate on different hot water heater options for the kitchen. Also working on organizing the kitchen pantry. Thank you to the members of this committee for faithfully helping out to provide meals on Wednesday nights, at special events, as well as organizing Sunday morning coffee.

**Outreach Evangelism:** *Rick Johnson—Met September 26 and October 24, 2023*

The Outreach Committee continues to work towards a better and welcoming church. We wish to make our church a place welcoming for all who wish to attend and take part in our worship and fellowship. We welcome new ideas and suggestions to make our goal easier. Any ideas are always welcome. One program we have going on right now is our connection with our friends in Indonesia. We have had communications with them via Zoom, so we can speak face to face. Our first meeting was a “get to know each other” as they had 7 members wishing to talk to us about their country and area. When we talked about the church, we found out that they were going to meet in a home for the first service. Since that meeting, their numbers have gone up with the hope to have 150 at their service. They have moved into a larger building with seating of 150-200. All equipment is borrowed from another church, including tables and chairs. They are expecting to soon have a building with seating for 1500-2000 people, so we can see that they have big plans for the future! Warner and Rick were asked to give a greeting to their congregation on Sunday, and we both were able to do so.

**Parish Education:** *Vacant—Did not meet.*

**Property Management:** *Sam Sundby—Did not meet.*

**Worship and Music:** *Pam Nelson— Met on October 9, 2023*

1. Special Music: There are a few that have signed up for Special Music The sign-up sheet is outside the office. Hopefully, more will sign up in the future.

2. Hymn Selection: During Advent, each Sunday could have a small ensemble.

3. Services Schedule: Wednesday evening: • Mitchell Ganske and Evan Knutson will be doing a Praise service on October 11th. All Saints Day – November 1st – There will be Communion and possibly candle lighting. Services for Fall/Winter/Spring: • The Fall/Winter/Spring special services were reviewed. Highlights are: Youth Sunday – October 8, 2023. The choir sang. Reformation Sunday (Confirmation) – October 29, 2023. All Saints Sunday – November 5, 2023. Allen will do an organ service. Stewardship Sunday – November 19, 2023. Advent Services – Start on December 3, 2023, Choir Program – December 10, 2023, Youth Program – December 17, 2023, Christmas Eve – December 24, 2023 – Regular morning service at 9:30 am. There will also be the 3:30 pm and 5:30 pm services. Christmas Day – December 25, 2023 – No service (Monday). Service of Carols – Possibly December 31, 2023. Youth Sunday – January 7, 2024, Ash Wednesday – February 14, 2024, Youth Wednesday – February 21, 2024, Palm Sunday – March 24, 2024, Easter Sunday – March 31, 2024, Youth Sunday (Graduate Sunday) – April 28, 2024

4. Celebration of Music Concert: The concert will be on Sunday, October 15, 2023 at 3:00 pm. Elliott Sander of Tacoma, Wasington, and Alex Swanson of Fargo, North Dakota will perform. A pop-up choir will perform a number during the program. Alex Moe will direct. The Facebook ads are out. Posters have been distributed around the area. A radio interview is scheduled with the Super Station and Alex Moe. The area newspapers have been notified. A free will offering will be collected. It will support the Wadena Area Food Shelf. Refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall following the concert.

UPDATE: The concert was AMAZING, and was attended by approximately 80+people. The free will offering was approx. \$1,225.00, and was given to the Wadena Area Food Shelf.

**Youth Leadership:** *Sara Ross—Met on November 1, 2023*

The Thank You Thanksgiving meal was on November 12th. Thank you to all the volunteers, for all the donations, and to everyone that attended. There was a Silent Auction as well. Youth helped with Trunk or Treat on Halloween night. Six kids will be attending the Middle School Youth Gathering on November 17 and 18. November 29th the Christmas program practice will begin. We are still recruiting new members.

**Endowment Committee**

**Immanuel Church Women:** *Diane Teigland- Did not meet.*

The ICW hosted the 85 and over brunch and celebration. Block cutting, quilting, and Bible study continue. Four women attended the NW Synod Conference and Fall Gathering at First Lutheran in Detroit Lakes.

**Lead Pastor:** *Pastor Nate Loer— October/Early November Highlights:* 1. I have been loving Wednesday evenings so much. What a great team we have. 2. I just completed my 5th week of a 6-week class about the Lutheran Confessions. 3. Confirmation October 25/29 was so great. Our 9 young people did such a great job. And the congregation really enjoys having this be part of the regular service. We will continue this practice! 4. All Saints Sunday was November 5. So important to acknowledge those who have died in the last year. We continue the practice of remembering not only our members who have died, but every person and family listed in our bulletin prayers of grief from the last year, too. 5. WDC Backpacks program had another food pack Thursday, November 9. We have lots of great volunteers -- but there is always room for one more! 6. On a personal note, the second half of October was a very unsettling time for our family as Amsale was critically ill following a planned cardiac procedure on October 15. She spent a total of 9 nights in the hospital. went to the ER 3 times and was transported via Helicopter, Airplane, and Ambulance at various times in the month. Eventually, doctors were able to resolve her stomach bleeding, and a gallbladder removal has much improved her life. Thank you for all the prayers and support. She is back at school and doing better each day. **Looking Ahead:** 1. Stewardship campaign culminates November 19 – we’ve had excellent speakers. 2. Thanksgiving Eve services are November 22 at 6:30pm. 3. Looking forward to the seasons of Advent and Christmas in December.

**Financial Secretary Report:** *Gail Klunenberger & Sue Johnson* – Total of Sunday general offerings counted and deposited in October 2023: \$15,301.75.

This does not include direct deposit offerings.

**Treasurers Report:** *Jena Osberg -*

**GENERAL FUND**

Total General Contributions: October 2023	\$23,068
Total Expenses:	\$33,143
General Fund Register: Balance as of October 30, 2023	\$120,464
Building Fund:	\$20,810

**Finance Committee:** *Bryan Greenwald— Met on October 10, 2023*

Greg Johnson resigned his spot on the finance committee due to his busy schedule. Committee went over thoughts on a new member. Lee Westrum and Judy Aagard were mentioned as possible replacements. Finance Committee will try and help the Endowment Committee come up with possible ideas for spending in the greater church area. Refreshments will be served by Finance Committee before and after Stewardship Sunday on 11/19. 2024 Budget meeting will be held on 12/5 at 6 p.m.

**Our Vision and Mission – Other Business:** Pastor Nate requested to add 2 more days to the staff paid holiday list, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Juneteenth. Pam Nelson motions to approve and Jena Osberg seconds. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE



GENERAL FUND	
10/1/2023	3963
10/8/2023	1592
10/15/2023	3784
10/22/2023	1697
10/29/2023	3099
Electronic Giving	485
Direct Deposit	8447
<b>TOTAL GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>23068</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Benevolences	432
Programs	5623
Staff including taxes and benefits	22463
Operations	747
Building Expenses	3877
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>33143</b>
<b>Gain/Loss</b>	<b>-10075</b>
<b>General Fund Register Balance as of 10/31/23</b>	<b>120464</b>

RESTRICTED				
	Balance 10/1/2023	Gifts & Additions	Payments	Balance 10/31/2023
Backpacks for Kids	\$7,147			\$7,147
Bell/Carillon	\$250			\$250
Cooking Matters (Ministerial Association)	\$1,506			\$1,506
Good Samaritan	\$1,949			\$1,949
General Reserve Funds	\$10,849			\$10,849
Giving Tree	\$4,204			\$4,204
Global Mission	\$1,495			\$1,495
Infant Care Kits	\$50			\$50
Library Fund	\$125			\$125
Luther Crest Scholarships	\$472			\$472
Lutheran World Relief	\$250			\$250
Medical Mission	\$5,000			\$5,000
Ministerial Fund	\$1,400	100.00	1,000.00	\$500
Organ Fund	\$537			\$537
Parish Nursing	\$487			\$487
Piano Fund	\$50	488.00		\$538
Scholarship Fund	\$8,070			\$8,070
School Kits	\$15			\$15
Sunday School	\$292			\$292
VBS	\$377			\$377
Wadena Food Shelf/Food Shelf	\$2,000			\$2,000
Wed. Night Faith Formation Supper	\$937		253.47	\$684
Wednesday Offering	\$91	578.10		\$669
Worship and Music	\$2,514			\$2,514
YAGM	\$7,118			\$7,118
<b>Restricted Fund Register Balance</b>	<b>\$57,183</b>	<b>1,166.10</b>	<b>1,253.47</b>	<b>\$57,096</b>


BUILDING FUND	
<b>Building Fund Balance 10/1/2023</b>	<b>20431</b>
Deposits & Interest	379
Payments	
<b>Building Fund Register Balance 10/31/2023</b>	<b>20810</b>

**Youth Christmas Program**  
 Sunday, December 17  
 9:30am During Worship  
 AND  
 Wednesday, December 20  
 6:00pm During Worship




Thank you to everyone in our congregation who supported the Thank You Thanksgiving Meal in November. To all who shared in the meal- thank you. To all who donated pies, silent auction items, money, and food items- thank you. To all who helped prepare the meal, set the tables, and do the dishes- thank you. We appreciate all you do for us throughout the year.

-The Youth of Immanuel

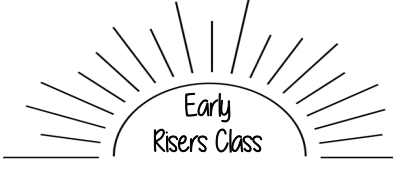



*Immanuel Lutheran Church*  
**ADVENT POTLUCK EVENT**  
**DECEMBER 3**  
**11:00 AM**

**Please sign up outside the church office to ensure there are enough supplies!**



**Dinner Club WILL NOT meet in December.**  
 January gathering TBA>




**Early Risers Class**

We're taking a little break from our Early Risers class. But we'll start a new class on the Gospel of Mark on January 7. Join us in person or via zoom. 8am Sunday mornings!

**Sanctuary Choir Christmas Program**  
 Sunday, December 10, during worship!




There will be NO Wednesday Discipleship on December 27th. All activities will resume on Wednesday, January 3rd, beginning with the congregational meal at 5:15 pm.




*Women's Ministry*

BIBLE STUDY- TUESDAY, DEC. 12 @ 1:30 PM  
 TUESDAY, JAN. 9 @ 1:30 PM  
 BLOCK CUTTING - MONDAY, DEC. 4 @ 9:00 AM  
 MONDAY, JAN. 8 @ 9:00 AM  
 QUILTING - NO QUILTING IN DECEMBER  
 JANUARY 15 & 16 @ 9 AM - 2 PM



**ILC GIVING TREE**

Please consider taking a tag from the Immanuel Giving Tree and sharing with those from our community in need.  
**Gifts need to be returned by Friday, December 15.**

**Gift Wrapping will be**  
**Monday, December 18 from 4:30-7:00 pm**  
 (pizza will be served)  
**AND**  
**Tuesday, December 19 at 8:30-12:00pm**  
 (soup will be served)

Come when you can, leave when you must.  
 Thank You!

# What's Happening

- December 1**  
1 pm - Catholic Charities Frozen Food Distribution
- December 3**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)  
11 am - Advent Event/Potluck (ALL AGES WELCOME)
- December 4**  
9 am - ICW—Block Cutting
- December 5**  
9 am - Staff Meeting
- December 6**  
Wednesday Discipleship Schedule (see below)  
7:30 pm - ILC Youth Council Meeting
- December 7**  
1 pm - MAC/NAPS  
2:30 pm - Backpack Food Pack
- December 9**  
12 pm - Use of Facility (Fellowship Hall)
- December 10**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)  
Sanctuary Choir Christmas Program (During Worship)  
4:30 pm - ILC Council Meeting
- December 12**  
9 am - Staff Meeting  
1:30 pm - ICW Bible Study
- December 13**  
12 pm - Rotary (#1 G. Klunenberg)  
Wednesday Discipleship Schedule (see below)
- December 14**  
6 pm - Northstar Round Table


- December 17**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)  
Youth Christmas Program (During worship)
- December 18**  
NO ICW Church Mice
- December 19**  
NO ICW Church Mice  
9 am - Staff Meeting  
5:30 pm - Dinner Club at
- December 20**  
12 pm - Rotary (catered)  
Wednesday Discipleship Schedule  
5:15 pm - Pizza  
6:00 pm - Youth Christmas Program
- December 24 - Christmas Eve**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below) (Communion Served)  
3:30 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service  
5:30 pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- December 25 - Christmas Day**  
OFFICE CLOSED
- December 26**  
OFFICE CLOSED
- December 27**  
NO Wednesday Discipleship (Resumes January 3rd)
- December 31 - New Year's Eve**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)
- January 1 - New Year's Day**  
OFFICE CLOSED

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

- 8:30 - Coffee Fellowship
- 9:30 - Worship (LIVE on YouTube)
- 9:30 - Radio Broadcast 920 AM or 101.7 FM

**Wednesday Worship Schedule**

- 5:15 pm - Congregational Dinner
- 6:00 pm - Praise Worship (Sanctuary)
- 6:45 pm - Wednesday Education
- 7:00 pm - Sanctuary Choir (All are welcome to join the choir!!)





**Backpacks for Kids**  
 Next food pack will be **Thursday, December 7 @ 2:30 pm** in the elementary cafeteria.  
**Volunteers are much appreciated for such an important program for our school and community!**

We invite members & friends to give a poinsettia plant to help decorate the chancel. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office to indicate whether the plant is in honor or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$18 per plant. The deadline is **Thursday, December 14**.  
*Poinsettia plants may be picked up after the 5:30 worship service on December 24.*