

## 2025 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  
Accompanist.....Suzanne Leigh

### Council

President.....Margie Anderson  
Vice President.....Matt Greenwaldt  
Secretary.....Kayla Carpenter  
Treasurer.....Bryan Greenwaldt  
Financial Secretary.....Jane Bagstad  
Financial Vice-Secretary.....Gail Klunenberg  
Congregational Life.....Diane Breitling  
Education.....Meagan Ferris  
Finance.....Dean Krogstad  
Outreach.....Vacant  
Property Management.....Steph Drange  
Worship and Music.....Anne Oldakowski  
Youth.....Katie Johnson

Immanuel Lutheran Church Office 218-631-2738

*Immanuel*  
JANUARY  
2026

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.*

January 2026

## From the Desk of Pastor Nate...

Happy New Year! It feels like I just got used to writing “2025” on all my documents. And now, it’s time to say farewell to that year and embrace 2026.

And as I have done the last several years, I’m going to challenge you to put your nose in your Bibles this year as well. In 2023, I challenged you to read the book of Matthew. In 2024, the book of Mark. Last year, I challenged you to read both Luke and Acts. In 2026, let’s complete the “Gospel Challenge” and get into the book of John. And not just John’s gospel. Read the Epistles of John, too (AKA 1, 2, and 3 John). You can read at whatever pace you’d like. But I’ll be commenting on these readings throughout the year to help you as best I can in that journey.

As you prepare to read John’s gospel, I want you to prepare yourself: this gospel isn’t like the other gospels. Of course, it is like the others in that John tells the story of his ministry, his arrival in Jerusalem, his arrest, trial, crucifixion, and resurrection. But there is a LOT of material in John that you do not find anywhere else. Let’s assume that John isn’t trying to “fill in the blanks” for us with what’s “missing” from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Let’s just assume that John is working from a different set of stories than those other gospel writers and is telling the story of Jesus in his own way.

Having said that, I encourage you to take a small bite of John’s gospel this month. Simply read John 1:1-18. And might I suggest that you read it more than once – perhaps even every day this month. And as you read it, think of it as an overture in a musical. An overture introduces bits and pieces of musical phrases and themes that you will hear in greater detail and fullness in the rest of the musical. John 1:1-18 functions in a similar way in the gospel of John. Using poetic images, John 1:1-18, introduces themes like light vs. darkness, earthly life vs. eternal life, the testimony of John the Baptist, the rejection of Jesus by the world, the glory of this incarnate One, Jesus’ relationship to the law, Jesus’ relationship to God the Father. These are all themes we can expect as the gospel of John unfolds.

These verses also get you thinking about some very deep ideas. “In the beginning” should take you all the way back to the creation story of Genesis 1, with themes like the Word, light, darkness, etc. But then moves in a new direction when we hear in John 1:14 that this word, “became flesh and lived among us.” What is this new thing that is happening in this old, old story? We will have to wait and see!

I’m looking forward to this coming year – and I hope you will find lots of ways to grow spiritually in the year ahead – Through John and through the other opportunities to learn, worship, share fellowship, and live generously here at Immanuel!

Humbly in Christ,

Pastor Nate

Pastor Nate



| GENERAL FUND                                   |       |
|--|-------|
| 11/2/2025                                      | 5301  |
| 11/9/2025                                      | 2728  |
| 11/16/2025                                     | 6211  |
| 11/23/2025                                     | 10946 |
| 11/30/2025                                     | 14771 |
| Electronic Giving                              | 425   |
| Thrivent                                       | 15    |
| Direct Deposit                                 | 3827  |
| Transfer                                       | 50000 |
| TOTAL GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS                    | 94224 |
|  |       |
| EXPENSES                                       |       |
| Benevolences                                   | 495   |
| Programs                                       | 1432  |
| Staff including taxes and benefits             | 25094 |
| Operations                                     | 488   |
| Building Expenses                              | 24987 |
| TOTAL EXPENSES                                 | 52496 |
| Gain/Loss                                      | 41728 |
| General Fund Register Balance as of 11/30/2025 | 41733 |

| RESTRICTED                                |                      |                      |          |                       |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|
|   | Balance<br>11/1/2025 | Gifts &<br>Additions | Payments | Balance<br>11/30/2025 |
| Backpacks for Kids                        | \$10,342             |                      | \$3,500  | \$6,842               |
| Bell/Carillon                             | \$250                |                      |          | \$250                 |
| Cooking Matters (Ministerial Association) | \$127                |                      |          | \$127                 |
| Congregational Life                       | \$2,000              |                      |          | \$2,000               |
| Easter Giving Blitz                       | \$100                |                      |          | \$100                 |
| Good Samaritan                            | \$422                |                      |          | \$422                 |
| General Reserve Funds                     | \$10,849             |                      |          | \$10,849              |
| Giving Tree                               | -\$2,308             | \$3,479              |          | \$1,171               |
| Global Mission                            | \$2,235              | \$30                 |          | \$2,265               |
| Library Fund                              | \$125                |                      |          | \$125                 |
| Luther Crest Scholarships                 | \$472                |                      |          | \$472                 |
| Lutheran World Relief                     | \$1,219              |                      |          | \$1,219               |
| Medical Mission                           | \$5,000              |                      |          | \$5,000               |
| Organ Fund                                | \$557                |                      |          | \$557                 |
| Parish Nursing                            | \$487                |                      |          | \$487                 |
| Piano Fund                                | \$538                |                      | \$250    | \$288                 |
| Soup Tuesday                              | \$20                 |                      |          | \$20                  |
| Scholarship Fund                          | \$8,070              |                      |          | \$8,070               |
| School Kits                               | \$1,275              |                      |          | \$1,275               |
| Sunday School                             | \$792                |                      |          | \$792                 |
| Thrivent Micro Grant                      | \$1,016              |                      |          | \$1,016               |
| VBS                                       | -\$299               |                      |          | -\$299                |
| Wadena Fire Victims                       | \$8,808              |                      | \$2,322  | \$6,486               |
| Wadena Food Shelf/Food Shelf              | \$181                |                      |          | \$181                 |
| Wadena Ministerial                        | \$0                  |                      |          | \$0                   |
| Wednesday Night Supper                    | -\$64                |                      |          | -\$64                 |
| Worship and Music                         | \$3,430              |                      |          | \$3,430               |
| YAGM                                      | \$7,116              |                      |          | \$7,116               |
| Restricted Fund Register Balance          | \$62,760             | 3,509.45             | 6,072.22 | \$60,197              |

| BUILDING FUND                  |            |       |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------|
| Building Fund Balance          | 11/1/2025  | 66569 |
| Deposits & Interest            |            | 2473  |
| Payments                       |            | 50000 |
| Building Fund Register Balance | 11/30/2025 | 19042 |

## FINANCIAL UPDATE



#### IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATES

The council met on Sunday, December 21, 2025. President Margie Anderson called the meeting to order.

**Committee Reports:**

**Endowment Committee:** Received of ND farmland, and was sold for \$130,000 which is a WONDERFUL gift to the fund.

**Congregational Life:** Diane Breitling– We continue to keep busy with Wednesday evening suppers. In addition, we hosted a Christmas cookie potluck following the Choir’s Christmas Concert on Dec 14th. We are holding a food drive for the Wadena Food Shelf throughout the month of December. Special thanks to Elana for creating postcards to send to the congregation with a list of most needed items for the food shelf, and to Steph and Peggy for heading up the Giving Tree Project.

**Outreach Evangelism:** *Vacant*– Did not meet.

**Parish Education:** Meagan Ferris– The Worship Wednesday Children’s Christmas Program was a joyful and successful evening celebrating the true meaning of Christmas. The children shared the Christmas story through a variety of elements including costumes, speaking parts, piano solos, and group songs. Their preparation and enthusiasm were evident and well received by those in attendance. Children participated in costumes and speaking roles that told the Christmas story. Musical elements included group songs and piano solos performed by students. The program reflected strong participation, teamwork, and engagement from the children. After the program, families and guests enjoyed a time of fellowship that included: Christmas Bingo with prizes, Hot chocolate, Decorate–your–own Christmas cookies. This provided a warm and welcoming opportunity for continued celebration and community connection. The Education Committee extends sincere thanks to everyone who helped organize, prepare, and support this event. Special appreciation is given to Marsha Kaufmann, Elana Seibert, Anna Fiemeyer, and Peggy Larson for their time, dedication, and hard work in making the program and evening activities a success. The event was well attended and positively received. It strengthened fellowship within the church and highlighted the talents and faith of our children. The program is considered a meaningful and successful part of our Worship Wednesday ministry. The Education Committee is excited about the coming New Year and looks forward to continuing to grow our youth programming. There is a strong desire to provide additional opportunities for youth service projects, allowing our children and students t o serve others, build relationships, and live out their faith in meaningful ways.

**Property Management:** Steph Drange– Projects are paused at the moment, may have a lead on a painter for the front of the church.

**Worship and Music:** Anne Oldakowski– They met Nov. 10. Special music is going well with many sign ups lately. We discussed upcoming Advent and Christmas services, including the choir and youth Christmas programs. Currently working on the TV bracket design and still more painting to do in front of the sanctuary. Continue to look for a new chair person for the committee. Next meeting is Jan 5, 2026.

**Youth Leadership:** Katie Johnson– No report.

**Other Reports**

**Immanuel Church Women:** Diane Teigland –Huge thank you to Audrey Loer and her crew for packing up the blankets and baby kits. No quilting in Dec, had a quilting party. 2 New quilters i n charge are Peggy Reidel and Linda Hoffman.

**LEAD PASTOR UPDATE– PASTOR NATE—November/Early December Highlights–**
1. Backpacks for Kids had another successful food pack on December 4. This is a great program and we see a lot of support from Immanuel and the rest of the community, too.
2. Getting Through the Holidays was November 20. Small group, but we did important work remembering our loved ones.
3. We had a couple of great music programs here recently. Sanctuary Choir program December 14; Youth Christmas program December 17. I’m grateful for all those musicians and leaders who make these special days possible.
4. The Giving Tree had another successful year. We made Christmas brighter for over 120 people in our community. Thanks to Steph Drange and Peggy Larson and all the other volunteers who make this project possible.
5. I thought the Stewardship Campaign was great. People enjoyed the “Live Generously” theme, and our speakers did a good job highlighting the good things Immanuel does in their lives and in the community. I’ve been working with the finance committee to put together the budget for 2026.
6. Pastoral Acts: Presided at a funeral for John Hauer at Karvonen’s on December 20. John isn’t a member, but the hospital called me to his bedside at the family’s request and after he died, they asked me to do the funeral. I always say “yes” to these in visitations.
**Coming Up**
1. Christmas Eve services December 24 at 3:30 and 5:30.
2. Next Backpack Food pack is January 8.
3. I start an early risers class on Sunday, January 11 at 8am on the Gospel and Epistles of John. This is a hybrid class and people can participate in person (Friendship Room) or online (Zoom)
4. Continuing to work with the nominating committee to find new council members and other elected positions.

**OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD: Financial Secretary Report:** *Reported by Jane Bagstad*

The total of Sunday general offerings counted and deposited was \$43,466.45. This does not include direct deposits.

**Treasurer’s Report:** *Bryan Greenwaldt*

**GENERAL FUND:** \$41,733 (11/30/2025)

**Total General Contributions:** \$94,224 (11/30/2025)

**Total Expenses:** \$52,496

**Building Fund Register Balance** \$66,569 (11/30/2025)

**Restricted Fund Balance** \$60,197 (11/30/2025)

**Finance Committee:** Dean Krogstad– Met on Dec 18, 2025 to prepare the 2026 Church budget. The proposed budget was presented to the church council on Dec 21, 2025. The proposed budget will be presented to the congregation at the Annual meeting in Jan 2026. There was a motion to accept the proposed budget made by Diane Breitling, and seconded by Gail Kluenenberg. Motion carried.


**Our Vision and Mission—Other Business:** Proposed Annual Meeting date Wednesday January 28 @ 5:30 pm supper/ 6:30 pm meeting. Back up date Sunday February 1 @ 10:45 am meeting. Motion was made by Dean Krogstad and Seconded by Bryan Greenwaldt, motion passed. Heard from Del on the Jeremiah 29 Project. They have done their trainings, assembled a board, have their 501 c3 status done and are able to raise funds. Wadena county has agreed to be a fiscal host for a \$200,000 grant, if accepted for grant, it will fund 3 staff people, it’s a 1 year grant. They will be looking for volunteers to teach life skills to the youth, if anyone is able to volunteer they would love to hear from you.

The meeting ended with the Lord’s Prayer and was adjourned . A motion was made by Matt Greenwaldt and seconded by Diane Breitling to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully,

Kayla Carpenter Secretary





Dinner Club will meet  
Tuesday, January 20  
@ 5:30 pm – The Uptown

CHRISTMAS DECORATION PACK-UP

Join us to pack up the Christmas decorations on  
Thursday, January 8 @ 9:00 am. We greatly  
appreciate the help!

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

**BLOCK CUTTING - MONDAY, JANUARY 5 @ 9:00 AM**  
**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2 @ 9:00 AM**

**BIBLE STUDY - TUESDAY, JANUARY 13 @ 1:30 PM**  
**(SEPT-OCT-NOV GATHER, PG #37)**  
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10 @ 1:30 PM**  
**(DEC-JAN-FEB GATHER, PG #26)**

**QUILTING - JANUARY 19 & 20 @ 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**  
**FEBRUARY 16 & 17 @ 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**

**We Welcome Birgitte Simpson**  
**January 18th**

The Endowment Fund recently made a \$2000 gift to People's Church, an Indigenous Ministry in Bemidji, MN. Birgitte Simpson, Mission Developer, Shelter Advocate, and Pastor, will be with us to share a greeting, words of thanks, and tell us more about this vital ministry in our Synod.



# ILC Annual Meeting

Wednesday  
January 28, 2025

All confirmed members of the congregation are voting members and are encouraged to attend. The back-up date for this meeting (in case of bad weather) is Sunday, February 1 at 10:45 am.

5:30 PM - Congregational Dinner  
6:30 PM - Annual Meeting

## Soup Tuesdays

January 6, 13, 20, 27  
February 10, 17


With serving beginning @ NOON

Join the Immanuel staff for a hot bowl (or two) of soup and conversation! Come when you can and leave when you must. A free-will offering will go to support the Giving Tree Fund.

### WORSHIP MINISTRY

Sign up outside the church office to usher, lector, assist with communion, and/or provide special music.





Join the Early Risers, online or in person, for a class on the Gospel & Epistles of John @ 8 am in the Friendship Room. This will be a 10-week class beginning on Sunday, January 11th. If you would like to join online, email Pastor Nate for the Zoom link (nateloer@gmail.com).

## Worship Wednesdays Resumes

# January 7

**Meal - 4:30-5:45**  
**Worship - 6:00**  
**Education - 6:45-7:30**  
**Sanctuary Choir - 7:00**

# What's Happening

**January 1 – New Year's Day**  
**OFFICE CLOSED**

**January 4**  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)

**January 5**  
9 am – ICW Block Cutting

**January 6**  
9 am – Staff Meeting  
12 pm – Soup Tuesday

**January 7**  
12 pm – Rotary (Group #3 N.Overland)  
Worship Wednesday Schedule (see below)  
7:30 pm – ILC Youth Council Meeting

**January 8**  
9 am – Christmas Decoration Pack-up  
1 pm – MAC/NAPS  
2:30 pm – WDC Backpack Food Pack  
6 pm – Northstar Round Table Meeting

**January 11**  
8-8:45 am – Early Risers Class  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)


**January 13**  
9 am – Staff Meeting  
12 pm – Soup Tuesday  
1:30 pm – ICW Bible Study – “November” Gather Study

**January 14**  
12 pm – Rotary (Catered)  
Worship Wednesday Schedule (see below)

**January 15**  
10:30 am – Catholic Charities Frozen Meal Distribution

### Sunday Worship Schedule

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



### Worship Wednesdays Schedule

- 4:30–5:45 pm – Dinner in Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 pm – Worship
- 6:45–7:30 pm – Education/Confirmation
- 7:00 pm – Sanctuary Choir Practice

All are welcome!

**January 18**  
8-8:45 am – Early Risers Class  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)  
*Visit from Birgitte Simpson, People's Church*  
3:00 pm – Julia Whynott's Student Piano Recital  
5:00 pm – Julia Whynott's Student Piano Recital

**January 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day**  
**OFFICE CLOSED**  
9 am – ICW Quilting  
6:30 pm – Use of Facility (PEO Meeting)

**January 20**  
9 am – ICW Quilting  
9 am – Staff Meeting  
12 pm – Soup Tuesday  
5:30 pm – Dinner Club @ The Uptown


**January 21**  
12 pm – Rotary (Group #1 G. Klunenberg)  
Worship Wednesday Schedule (see below)

**January 25**  
8-8:45 am – Early Risers Class  
Sunday Worship Schedule (see below)

**January 26**  
2 pm – Book Club (Friendship Room)

**January 27**  
9 am – Staff Meeting  
11 am – Dementia Caregiver Support Group (Friendship Room)  
12 pm – Soup Tuesday

**January 28**  
12 pm – Rotary (Catered)  
**2025 Annual Meeting ~ No Worship Wednesday**  
5:30 pm – Congregational Dinner  
6:30 pm – ILC Annual Meeting



## Backpacks for Kids

OUR NEXT PACK IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, **JANUARY 8 @ 2:30 PM** IN THE ELEMETARY CAFETERIA. OUR FEBRUARY PACK IS ON THURSDAY, **FEBRUARY 5 @ 2:30 PM** SAME LOCATION. PLEASE ENTER THE SCHOOL THROUGH THE OFFICE DOORS (COLFAX AVENUE). COME HELP US PREPARE WEEKEND FOOD FOR KIDS IN NEED!

## BOOKCLUB

*"The Tattooist of Auschwitz"* By Heather Morris  
Monday, January 26  
Friendship Room @ 2:00 pm  
Anyone is welcome to attend!!  
(4th Monday of each month -Sept-May)

