

GRACEVINE

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

God's Purpose for Immanuel Lutheran Church is to WELCOME and EMBRACE one another in God's love, and to SERVE and SEEK JUSTICE for those in need.

December 2017

Pastor's Message

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Sunday, December 10

Hanging of the Greens following worship. Come and help decorate the church - many hands are needed! Chili and cinnamon roll lunch to follow.

Sunday, December 10

Advent/Christmas Choir Fest at Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 2:00 p.m. Come enjoy seasonal choral & instrumental music.

Sunday, December 17

Children's Christmas Pageant, 5:00 p.m.

Wed., December 20

Caroling Party, with soup supper to follow, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve service, 5:30 p.m.



The four Sundays before Christmas comprise the season of Advent. This year the theme of our Advent worship will be "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." Each stanza of this favorite hymn expresses one of the ancient and prophetic titles for Jesus:

- Wisdom
- Adonai and Ruler of the House of Israel
- Root of Jesse
- Key of David
- Dayspring
- King of the Nations
- God-With-Us

Together these are known as the "O Antiphons." An antiphon is

a framing verse chanted or sung before and after the Psalm in the liturgy. These verses were chanted before and after the Magnificat in the Vespers (evening prayer) service on the seven days prior to Christmas Eve. The words of the hymn we sing date back to around the 12th century, but the prayers on which they are based are even more ancient than that.

Traditionally the church has set aside Advent as a time of repentance and reflection on the coming of Jesus into our human story. Advent is a season of longing. We long for the light to return as darkness encroaches. We long for Christ to shape our lives and our attitudes. We long for the world to be different than it is. We share these longings with the prophets of Israel, with Mary and Joseph and with all the witnesses to Jesus' birth.

So this Advent season we will enter into the longing. We will sing this ancient hymn and reflect on these ancient prayers, asking Christ to come to us, dwell with us and transform us. We will offer opportunities to give to less fortunate people in our community. We will prepare our hearts and minds for the true meaning of Christmas - that God is truly with us. O come, O come Emmanuel.



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Worship: Hannah Norgard

A wonderful bunch of thanks for your continued participation in our worship services! Especially those who helped out in November:

- ◆ CJ Bach Family
- ◆ Taegan Bach
- ◆ Raeleigh Bridges
- ◆ Lisa Briggs
- ◆ Dave Coe
- ◆ Bill Huntington
- ◆ Denise James
- ◆ Ted and Mary Kienitz
- ◆ Bill and Joan Lemen
- ◆ Jace Paopao
- ◆ Paopao Family
- ◆ Laurie Schmidt
- ◆ Toney Serbousek
- ◆ Tracy and Shannon Shuck
- ◆ Bev Stitt
- ◆ Ruby Tewahade
- ◆ Tewahade Family
- ◆ Ron Wineteer

Closer to Home & Our Shepherd's Pantry:

We served 31 meals at Closer to Home on Monday, November 13. Our Shepherd's pantry served 26 adults and 13 children in November. We are very thankful for the donations we received from the CHS FBLA club, St. Patrick's Catholic Church, The New Leaf, and several individuals and families this month. The Primary School and Middle School are currently organizing food drives to benefit Our Shepherd's Pantry also. Our community is amazingly generous!



FEED THE HUNGRY

Secretary's Report: Sharon Thurlow

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council met on November 14, 2017. Those in attendance were Pastor Ann Sundberg, Yvonne Moody, Denise James, Barb Landen, Laurie Schmidt, Kit Watson, Robyn Baquet, and Sharon Thurlow. Absent was Uati Paopao,

Devotions were about gratitude. "Who would you thank?"

Minutes were approved as submitted with a motion from Yvonne and a second from Barb.

Treasurer's report was not available.

Pastor led 5 Sunday worship services. She also presided at the Vinton-Gregory wedding and the baptism of Angeline Roach. She held a meeting to begin planning for our youth to attend the Youth Gathering in 2018.

Planning is underway for Advent Season. Upcoming events include Hanging of the Greens, caroling, Christmas Eve service and, of course, the Children's Christmas Program.

Building and Grounds: The **NEW** sound has been installed and approved for payment. The organ has also been updated and repaired.

31 meals were served at Closer to Home. 26 Adults and 13 children received food from the Shepherd's Pantry.

The nominating committee will be getting started on nominations for the next council seats. Please prayerfully consider accepting a term on the council if asked.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Please sign up to provide poinsettias for Christmas Eve. There is a sign up sheet posted on the kitchen door. You may choose to provide one either “in Memory” or “in Honor” of someone or something important to you. Please make sure to indicate your desire on the sign-up sheet.

Hanging of the Greens on December 10

Each year we set aside time to decorate the church for Christmas. We hang boughs in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, and we set up a tree decorated with Chrismons, handmade ornaments that represent Christian symbols. Many hands are needed to help, so please plan to stay after worship on Sunday, December 10. The council will provide chili and cinnamon rolls following all the work.

Caroling Party on December 20

Come and join in for a soup supper and caroling on Wednesday, December 21. We will gather at the church for supper at 6:00 and then take off to sing at the homes of some of our shut-ins and older members. This is an inter-generational event! Anyone and everyone is welcome! (If we have enough people, we could even divide into two groups.) If there is someone you know who would appreciate a caroling visit, please get in touch with Pastor Ann or Robyn Baquet.



We received the following note after the Fall Feast. Dixie, along with several other folks from our congregation, received a “to-go” box of turkey and fixings.

Dear Church Friends,

Thank you for the delicious dinner last Sunday. God bless you all.

Dixie Eaton



Altar Flowers

A big Thank You to those of you who have furnished altar flowers this past year. They are very much appreciated, and many people comment on how pretty they look. Remember that you may take them home after the service and enjoy them there too. When they have lost their beauty, return the vase to the church kitchen and it will find its way back to the floral shop. The New Leaf is our default shop, but you can choose to order someplace else or bring your own.

We do make the list up for several months at a time and that makes it easier for me and for the floral shop. The new chart is up so please sign up early if there is a date that has significance for you. I will begin to post the orders with the other altar care notes so that it will be easier if questions come up with our altar care people. If the arrangement does not need to be picked up, I will note that on the list. E-mail is the best way for me to contact you and I appreciate those who get back to me in a timely manner. Thank you again and enjoy the arrangements at church and again in your home.

–Junice Dagen

Help put a bit of magic in the lives of those in need this Christmas!

It's hard for many of us – adults or children – to imagine not being able to celebrate during the holiday season. But for many, finding the extra money to afford a holiday celebration is a struggle at best, and frequently impossible.

You can help! There are children and adults living in poverty, right here in our community. Let's help make their Christmas special!

Stop by Immanuel Lutheran Church and pick up a Christmas stocking(s) labeled with information to stuff the stocking. We have 30 stockings to fill! Stuff the stocking (Some suggestions are listed below), and return it to the church by Wednesday, December 20th. The stockings will be delivered on Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24th. Let's share the joy, the wonder and God's love!!

Below are a few "stuffing" suggestions:

CHILD'S STOCKING

A child size fleece blanket

A snuggly stuffed animal

A child's toothbrush & toothpaste

Travel size games like Sorry/chess/checkers

Mittens

Pinky ball

Perfume/fragrance for 9-12 yr. olds

Nail polish

Lip gloss

Holiday pencils

Lego sets

Small puzzles

Small blank journal & pen

Tube socks

Small flash light with batteries

Harmonica

Jump rope



ADULT'S STOCKING

Christmas Goodies

Fruit

Winter gloves

Socks

Scarf

Soap & soap case

Body cream/moisturizer

Toothbrush and toothpaste

Fragrance

Small shampoo and conditioner

Lip balm or chap-stick

Nail manicure kit

Crossword or Sudoku book

Deck of cards

Current magazine



If you would be willing to help deliver the stockings, please contact the church office.

You can call us at 308.432.5408 or email chadimmanuel@bbc.net.

Want to keep Christ in Christmas?

**Feed the hungry, clothe the
naked, forgive the guilty,
welcome the unwanted, care
for the ill, love your enemies,
and do unto others as you
would have done unto you.**

- Steve Maraboli

Stewardship: Karen Rupp

The church year has come to an end...Happy New Year! Advent brings us into a new year of our church calendar.

Thank you to those who completed and submitted your Time and Talents surveys and Commitment Cards. If you haven't done so yet, please do –it's not too late. Just bring them to church with you or mail them in.

Advent is a time of preparation and patient expectant waiting. I am sharing with you an article from Lutheran Seminary Stewardship. It has some helpful suggestions about teaching stewardship to our children and I think good reminders for all ages.

Teaching Stewardship to Children

By Minner Serovy

It always puts a smile on my face when I visit churches that involve their children in worship. I grew up when children had a separate worship as part of Sunday School. When I see children helping usher, lighting candles, and gathering for a children's message, I know that they are becoming totally comfortable in what, to me, was a mysterious space.

But when I see children helping with offering plates, I wonder what they are learning about stewardship. In too many churches, they would see mostly empty plates passed from person to person. Pledges are being paid by check or electronic transfers, perhaps, but the liturgical symbols of returning to God a portion of the abundance we've received are being lost. Children and visitors may be confused.

It takes special effort, then, to teach our children about stewardship as a Christian practice and responsibility. We know that children learn as much by observing and experiencing as from overt teaching. Children absorb parents' attitudes and emotions about money and possessions, and these will have an impact into their own adulthood.

Stewardship, of course, is not limited to money. When we state that all that we have and all that we know belongs to God, we affirm that we are called to be stewards: caretakers of a life and creation that ultimately do not belong to us. It's not about just money, but it must not exclude money.

Parents naturally teach stewardship of possessions and of creation. We ask children to take care of their toys and clothes. We teach care for the natural world through recycling and protection of animals. Stewardship of money is harder, especially when the messages we see every day suggest that we aren't happy or successful unless we have the newest, the largest, the most of everything.

How can we foster the generosity and compassion we want in children?

We need to get over the taboo of talking about money and money values. We need to be in touch with our own learned money messages, and be challenged by Jesus' teachings about our relationship to money. Children notice when we're silent or uncomfortable. Make sure that Sunday School teachers are aware of the stewardship resources for children.

Teach (and learn) to distinguish between "wants" and "needs." Possessions will not make us happy. Some studies suggest that learning [delayed gratification](#) early in life is one of the best predictors of success in later life.

Use faith language as you practice stewardship. A generation ago, we assumed that everyone knew that sharing, giving to those who had less, caring for the earth, and seeking justice are Christian values. That is not so self-evident now. We seek justice and show compassion because Jesus asks us to. Certainly, Christianity is not the only faith tradition that aspires to these values, but *we* (also) do it as an expression of our faith.

Help children experience the outcome of their generosity. Ask them to help identify toys or clothing they no longer use. Rather than dropping them in a Goodwill bin, find a place where your children can see people receive their gifts. Bring them with you when the food pantry is open to see their contributions distributed. If you make a gift to a distant mission, read them the stories in the newsletter. Seeing a life changed by your generosity is a powerful motivator to do more.

Tour your church building and point out rooms that are used by community groups (Scouts, 12-Step) and explain how that serves the community. Stop by the office, the storage spaces, the library, and the kitchen. These things all cost money, and form their church home. It is why we also give money to support our church.

The lessons we learn as children stick with us, even if they hibernate for a while. Faith language and seeing generosity at work will help children and their family learn that money can't buy happiness, but giving it away does.

Minner Serovy is a Ministry Relations Officer for the Presbyterian Foundation, serving the PCUSA Synod of Lakes and Prairies. She has served several agencies of the PCUSA following education at Carroll College (University) and Union Theological Seminary in NYC.

Thank you all for all you do! I feel privileged to be serving with you.

-Karen Rupp



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
747 ANN STREET
CHADRON, NE 69337

Church Council Members

President– Robyn Baquet

Vice President– Denise James

Secretary– Sharon Thurlow

Treasurer– Kim Bradley

Building & Grounds– Uati Paopao

Education– Yvonne Moody

Evangelism– Laurie Schmidt

Fellowship– Kit Watson

Social Ministry– Barb Landen

Stewardship– Karen Rupp

Worship– Hannah Norgard

Youth/Young Adult– Leila Tewahade

Pastor– Ann Sundberg

Other Staff:

Financial Secretary– Lorrie Bauer

Custodian– Melissa Churchill

Church Secretary– Amy Jones

Important contact information-

Church Office Phone: 308.432.5408

Pastor Ann Sundberg's Cell: 919.475.9754

Church email: chadimmanuel@bbc.net

Church website: www.chadimmanuel.org

Nebraska Synod Website: www.nebraskasynod.org,

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ELCA Church wide Website, www.elca.org,