

Immanuel Lutheran Church January 2025 Newsletter

According to conventional wisdom, “Blood is thicker than water.” We understand this to mean that family ties are stronger than other social ties, such as friendships or other less permanent bonds. On the other hand, for Christians, our baptismal reality says, “Water holds longer than blood.” This means that our connection to the family of God through baptismal rebirth is longer-lasting than our membership in any human family, as durable as that bond may be. Yet these two realities are not always in opposition. Our various human families and our church family may overlap and reinforce each other. It is generally true that as goes one, so goes the other. In fact, “In a truly perfect, sinless world, the church and the family are identical; without the fall into sin, every last member of every domestic family would be numbered among God’s people” (Pastor Timothy Pauls, *Seelsorger*, vol 3, p 21). So much to consider!

This was on my mind as I observed many extended families coming to church together at Christmas and as I heard about the gatherings they had in their homes before and after Christmas. Unlike many of you, my wife and I did not grow up near our extended families (with grandparents hundreds of miles away and cousins scattered in several states). We didn’t experience it growing up, so we don’t miss it when it doesn’t happen now. Yet two years ago, when my parents told us that year would be their last 500-mile winter road trip, we were still sad, since we always enjoy being with them. My work (and my mom’s role as church organist) prevents us from traveling far at Christmas. That’s why (Lord willing) I’ll be taking a quick road trip to Minnesota with Nora to spend a few days with Mom and Dad between their birthdays in mid-January 2025.

But ever since childhood, I’ve sensed that some of my most significant relationships are with my church family (and the extended church family). Our Lord teaches us to honor our fathers and mothers and to love our neighbors (including those in our own households) as ourselves. He also teaches us to address his Father as our Father, which makes us siblings in Christ. He says that “whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother” (Matthew 12:50). If we live far away from our families, our nearby church family helps compensate for that at present; in the age to come we are also promised eternal life (Matthew 19:29). Because our Lord Jesus was born among us as our Brother and gave his life to bring us into the heavenly family, our relationship with him is more valuable than any other (Matthew 10:37).

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR JANUARY 2025 CALENDAR

Saturday, January 4 th	5:30 p.m. – Worship service with Holy Communion
Sunday, January 5 th	No Service – Winter Storm
Monday, January 6 th	No School-Snow Day (Home Learning Packets)
	7:00 p.m. – Elders Meeting
Tuesday, January 7 th	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
	School Resumes
Wednesday, January 8 th	8:15 a.m. – Chapel – Pastor Wood
	10:00 a.m. – Community Bible Study at the Original
	7:30 p.m. – Choir
Saturday, January 11 th	5:30 p.m. – Worship service
Sunday, January 12 th	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class
	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
Monday, January 13 th	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
	6:30 p.m. – PTL Meeting
Wednesday, January 15 th	10:00 a.m. – Community Bible Study at the Original
	Pastor Wood on vacation January 15 th 12:00 p.m. – January 20 th
	12:15 p.m. – Chapel – Pastor d’Entremont
	6:30 p.m. – Congregational Fund Meeting
	7:00 p.m. – Church Council Meeting
Thursday, January 16 th	1:00 p.m. – LWML Meeting in church basement
	6:30 p.m. – Board for Parochial Ed. Meeting
Friday, January 17 th	12:30 p.m. – School dismissal at 12:30 p.m.
Saturday, January 18 th	5:30 p.m. – Worship service with Holy Communion
Sunday, January 19 th	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class
	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion
Monday, January 20 th	No School
	4:00 p.m. – Beginner Catechesis
	7:30 p.m. – Men’s Club Meeting
Tuesday, January 21 st	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
	Dual Circuit Pastors meet at Trinity, Nashville
Wednesday, January 22 nd	8:15 a.m. – Chapel – Pastor Stallworth
	10:00 a.m. – Community Bible Study at the Original
	7:30 p.m. - Choir
Saturday, January 25 th	5:30 p.m. – Worship Service
Sunday, January 26 st	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class
	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
	11:00 a.m. – Annual Voters Meeting –
	Election of officers & Board Members
Monday, January 27 th	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
	National Lutheran School Week January 27 th – 31 st
Wednesday, January 29 th	10:00 a.m. – Community Bible Study at the Original
	12:15 p.m. – Chapel – K, 1 st , and 2 nd
	7:30 p.m. – Choir

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry - lcms.org/stewardship

Newsletter Article - January 2025

Repenting of “Feasts that Know No Fast”

Fresh off the Christmas season and the retail frenzy that accompanies it, January brings a shot of frigid air into the lives of the people we know and love. This is not a meteorological statement either. While it is true that January is one of the colder months for those in North America, the cold front blast that hits us is the full force of credit card spending that fueled the retail frenzy. The bills for the gifts, the parties, the food and the travel have now come due. The credit card makes things convenient, but it also requires more discipline than many can muster. When the bills come in January for December’s celebration, it really puts a damper on things.

Congregations often make the same mistake in stewardship. We often charge forward in doing what we always do or starting new endeavors without counting the cost. But at the end of the month, or the end of year, when the bill comes due, the red ink on the congregational balance sheet smacks the people in the face like a stiff north wind in January. We hunkered down. We circle the wagons. We start to panic. The work of the Gospel suffers.

The fifth verse of “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) addresses this January situation. The words penned by William Watkins Reid are very needful for us to hear as we start a new year, while dealing with the bills of past efforts and expense.

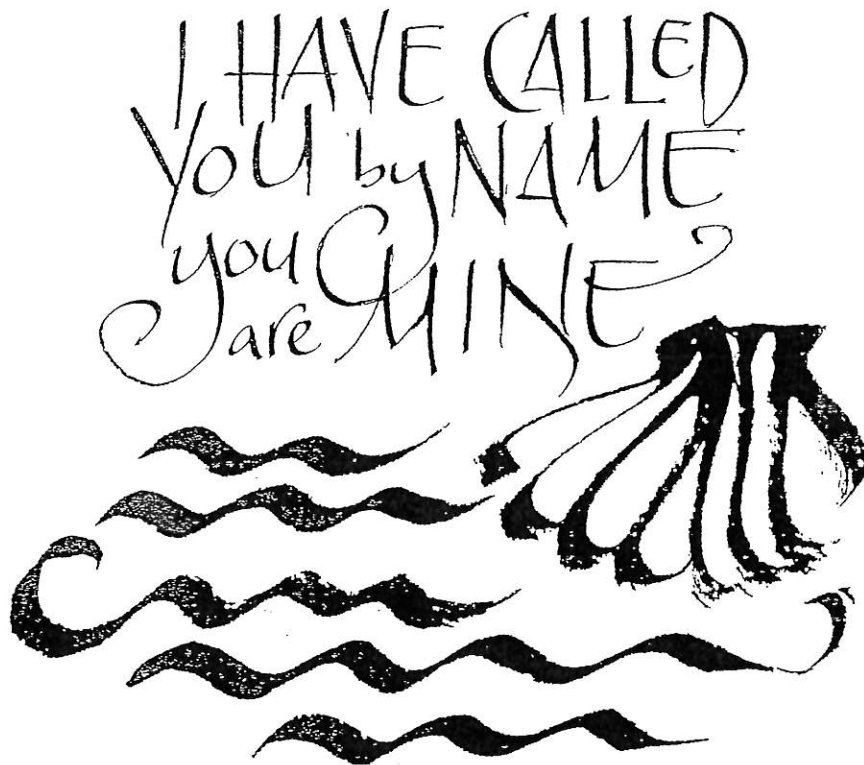
“Forgive us, Lord for feast that knows not fast ...” This hits us hard, doesn’t it? We love when the money is flowing, the parties are going, and things are getting bigger and better. But there is a time in life, and most especially in our spiritual disciplines, that we need to fast. The purpose of a fast is to step back, lay something aside for a time, and replace it with meditation on Scripture and prayer. This is designed to keep us from turning something that may well be good into an idol that separates us from the God who loves us in Christ.

“For joy in things that meanwhile starve the soul ...” In “The Parable of the Sower,” we hear Jesus talk about how the worries and cares of life choke out the growth of the seed of the Word that was planted. We know how this happens in our lives. Professional and youth sports do this. Materialism does this. Travel and leisure and do this. There is a list of things that we enjoy that starve the soul.

But it also happens in our congregations. When corporate stewardship is not managed in a responsible way, it can and does destroy individual stewardship. Is it good individual stewardship to support a ministry that doesn't take its corporate responsibility seriously?

"For walls and wars that hide your mercies vast and blur our vision of the Kingdom goal." This is the ultimate end of the idolatry of failed stewardship. We build walls between believers within the church and hamper those who are outside from coming to the Light of Life that is Jesus. The wars we fight over money and its impact on ministry do the same. It eventually blurs our vision of what we are here to do: share the Good News of Jesus. When the wintry blast of January hits us in this fashion, we are called to repent.

When the Holy Spirit uses the cold front of the call to repentance, we meet the God who forgives and restores. That is what He does for individual and corporate stewards. When the bills hit, they call us back to Jesus. He is the One who indeed forgives us our shallow thankfulness and leads us into the bounty of His mercy yet again.



I S A I A H 4 3 : 1

BIRTHDAYS

1. Amber Jacobs
2. Savanna Meyer
3. Sharon Frederking, Mason Meyer
5. Nicole Bruck
7. Megan Fulton
8. Jacob Schwankhaus
10. Clark Weeke, Savannah Borrenpohl
12. Tatum Andrews, Jack Gass, Jayme Stevenson
15. Tim Traub
18. Andrea Buettner, Connor Obermeier
19. Dixon Harre
23. Betty Hasheider
24. Dustin Teter
25. Rex Obermeier
26. Hank Borrenpohl
27. Amanda Millenbine
28. Sadie Bergmann
29. Kristen Hundelt
30. Michael Storck
31. Major Rossel

VISITATION COMMITTEE

Janet Lange

ALTAR GUILD COMMITTEE

Cindy Kuhlengel and Mary Ann Niedens

ACOLYTES

- Saturday, January 4th – Michael Lautenschlaeger
Sunday, January 5th – Landan Kraus
Saturday, January 11th – Kooper Suedmeyer
Sunday, January 12th – Maylen Kramper
Saturday, January 18th – Collins Schumacher
Sunday, January 19th – Matthew Lautenschlaeger
Saturday, January 25th – Landon Elliott
Sunday, January 26th – Olivia Bergmann

ORGANISTS/PIANISTS

- Saturday, January 4th – Sophia Wood
Nora Wood
Sunday, January 5th – Sharon Krueger
Saturday, January 11th – Pastor Wood
Sunday, January 12th – Barbara Croessman
Saturday, January 18th – Sophia Wood
Sunday, January 19th – Sharon Krueger
Saturday, January 25th – Pastor Wood
Sunday, January 26th – Sharon Krueger

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

- Saturday, January 4th – Kent Helbig
Sunday, January 5th – Jonathan Schneider
Saturday, January 18th – Mike Jacobs
Sunday, January 19th – Dennis Pruehsner

USHERS

- Saturday – Jeff Obermeier
Sunday – Cameron Obermeier and
Brent Schneider

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES IN JANUARY

- 2nd – Garrett and Elizabeth Guest
6th – William & Pam Strasburg
12th – Hank & Melanie Borrenpohl
23rd – William & Denise Frederking

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We will be taking down the Christmas decorations at church on Thursday, January 9th at 5:30 p.m. We would appreciate any help we can get! Sunday school will resume on Sunday, January 12th.

REPORT DEADLINE

Each chairman or secretary of a board, committee or organization should have their year's report in the church office by Monday, January 13th. If you have any questions, please call the church office 618-243-6216.

CONGREGATIONAL FUND MEETING

Wednesday, January 15th at 6:30 p.m.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, January 15, at 7:00 p.m.

LWML NEWS

LWML will meet for their monthly meeting at 1pm on Thursday, January 16, in the church basement. Mary Ann Niedens will have the devotion, and Carolyn Rennegarbe will have the topic. Please join us!

ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING

Sunday, January 26, 2025
11:00 A.M.

This meeting will be held immediately after the morning worship service. All members are urged to attend this important meeting.

SCHOOL NEWS

School will resume on Wednesday, January 6th after Christmas break.

National Lutheran Schools Week is scheduled for January 26th – January 31st – more details will be available later.

Immanuel Lutheran School has an immediate opening for a part time Principal for the remainder of the 2024- 2025 school year or until a permanent Principal can be called or contracted. The applicant should have a BA in Education and background in school administration. If interested please contact Donna Davis at 714-788-0855 or donnadavis@immanuelokawville.org

Sports Schedules

Girls Basketball

Jan. 7 vs. Nashville Middle School 6:00 pm
Jan. 9 @ St. John Chester 6:00 pm
Jan. 8-12 Holy Cross B Team Tourn. TBA
Jan. 14-21 SIJHSAA Regional Tourn. TBA
Jan. 25, 30, Feb 1 SIJHSAA State Tourn. TBA

Boys Basketball

Jan. 6 vs. Coulterville (coed) 6:00 pm
Jan. 7 @ Sandoval 6:00 pm
Jan. 9 vs. Willow Grove/St. Mary Centralia 6:00 pm
Jan. 8-12 Holy Cross B Team Tourn. TBA
Jan. 14 vs Trinity Defenders 6:00 pm
Jan. 16 @ Oakdale 6:00 pm
Jan. 23-26 All Lutheran Tourn. @ St. John Red Bud
Jan. 28-Feb. 4 SIJHSAA Regional Tourn. TBA

POINSETTIAS

The Altar Guild thanks the following for again beautifying our Lord's altar for the Christmas season: Adeline Blumhorst (one poinsettia) in memory of husband, Roland Blumhorst and parents, William and Bertha Brune and Otto and Elda Blumhorst; Bill and Annette Eade (one poinsettia) in memory of parents, Harold and Beulah Borrenpohl; Barb Croessman (one poinsettia) in memory of husband, John Croessman; Gene and Sharon Frederking (one poinsettia) in memory of parents, Edwin and Erna Frederking and Virgil and Ruby Hoelscher; Roy and Linda Frederking (one poinsettia) in memory of parents Edwin and Erna Frederking

and Warren and Virginia Stricker; Eula Haier (one poinsettia) in memory of husband, Fred Haier and parents Fred and Ester Haier and Willard and Beulah Krohne; Ruth Harre (one poinsettia) in memory of husband, Duane, grandson Brody C. Miller, parents William and Eileen Auld and Henry and Verdell Harre; brothers-in-laws, Ken Harre and Jim Blair; Norbert and Betty Hasheider (one poinsettia) in memory of parents, Elmer and Loraine Hasheider and Henry and Verdell Harre and brothers, Wayne Hasheider, Duane and Ken Harre, and sister, Cheryl Oeltjen and brother-in-law, Jim Blair; Marita Hemman (one poinsettia given to the Glory of God); Robert and Donna Kraus (2 poinsettias) one in memory of parents, Carl and Arlene Kraus and Connie Kraus and the other one memory of parents, Lavern and Hazel Dick; Larry and Cindy Kuhlengel (two poinsettias) in memory of parents, Rufus and Flora Kuhlengel and parents, Ray and Lorine Schuette; Kyle Martens and Donna Roseman (3 poinsettias) one in memory of Kyle's wife, Kim Martens, Kim's father, Roger Canada, and the other in memory of Donna's parents and family; Jeff and Laura Obermeier (one poinsettia) in memory of parents Joe and Ann Wojtowicz; Leonard and Lois Obermeier (one poinsettia) in memory of son-in-law, Keith Wienstroer and parents, John and Ella Obermeier and Henry and Verdell Harre, brothers, Ken and Duane Harre, Ed Obermeier, and sisters Hulda Jacobs, Bertha and Lou Randoll, brother-in-law, Jim Blair, brother, John and sister-in-law Kathryn Obermeier; Gene and Carolyn Rennegarbe (one poinsettia) given to the Glory of God; Earl and Ruth Weeke, (two poinsettias) in memory of Wayne Hasheider, Cheryl Oeltjen and Elroy Weeke, and the other in memory of parents, Albert and Esther Weeke and Elmer and Loraine Hasheider. Thanks to all!

WEEKLY WORSHIP RESOUC E LISTINGS

SECOUND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Sat. January 4 & Sun., January 5, 2025

Old Testament: 1 Kings 3:4-15

Epistle: Ephesians 1:3-14

Gospel: Luke 2:40-52

Order of Service – Divine Service Setting One

Hymns: 385 From East to West

410 Within the Father's House

376 Once in Royal David's City

523 O Word of God Incarnate

725 Children of the Heavenly Father

862 Oh, Blest the House

THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Sat. January 11 & Sun., January 12, 2025

Old Testament: Isaiah 43:1-7

Epistle: Romans 6:1-11

Gospel: Luke 3:15-22

Order of Service – Prayer and Preaching

Hymns: 594 God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It

728 How Firm a Foundation

596 All Christians Who Have Been Baptized

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Sat. Jan. 18 & Sun. Jan. 19, 2025

Old Testament: Isaiah 62:1-5

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Gospel: John 2:1-11

Order of Service – Divine Service Setting Four

Hymns: 913 O Holy Spirit, Enter In

402 The Only Son from Heaven

649 Blest Be the Tie That Binds

650 Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling

652 Father, We Thank Thee

693 O Holy Spirit, Grant Us Grace

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Sat. Jan. 25 & Sun. Jan. 26, 2025

Old Testament: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Gospel: Luke 4:16-30

Order of Service – Matins

Hymns: 845 Where Charity and Love Prevail

839 O Christ, Our True and Only Light

822 Alleluia! Let Praises Ring



And manifested his GLORY
JOHN 2:11