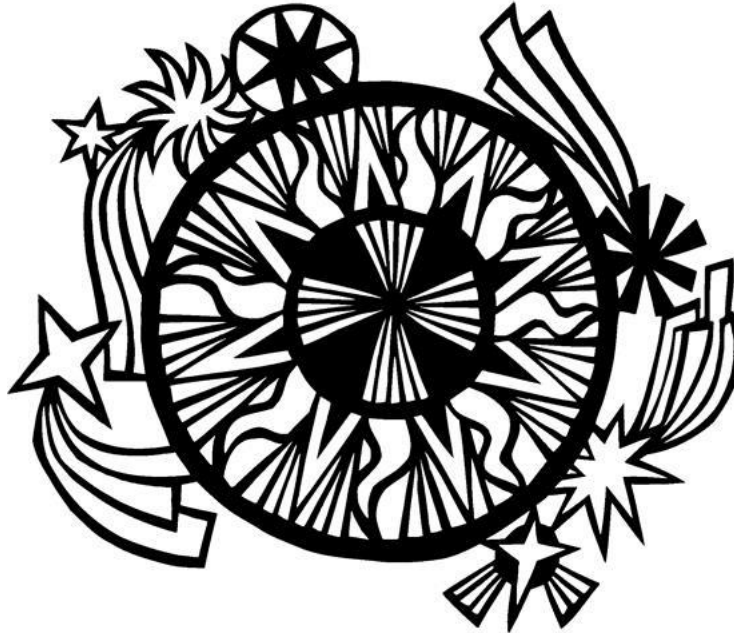


Immanuel Lutheran Church

January 2021

Messenger



Immanuel Lutheran Church
Called, Empowered, and Sent by God to Live, Love, and Learn God's Word
Nuestra Declaración De Misión
Somos llamados, autorizados, y enviados por Dios para vivir, amar, y aprender la Palabra de Dios
Pastor Leslie Mahraun
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Immanuel Lutheran Church
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From Pastor Leslie:

Happy New Year, or should we say, "Blessed New Year"?

Perhaps like me you are glad to see 2020 leave us, and perhaps like me you wonder what is in store for us in the new year. We do not have any idea what 2021 will hold, only that God will continue to hold us in the coming year. And isn't that where our faith and hope come to fruition? It is in the promise from God, the "I am with you" that we take our strength. For we know the pandemic is still a part of our reality and that precautions are still in place and we don't know how much longer they will stay in place. We do know that for now we will continue to worship via technology, pastoral visits will continue via telephone, council will continue via phone, email, and zoom. We miss the face to face, but we know that we are doing the best we can, given the situation.

The love and care for our neighbor matters, and we will continue to be responsible stewards of our best health practices. If you would like to borrow a hymnal from the church simply sign out a hymnal for your own until we return to worship in person. All the worship will be provided in the bulletin, but sometimes it is good to have a hymnal for your own reference. The sign-up sheet is on the table in the Fellowship Hall.

As we look ahead to what the new year brings to us let us remember that we are the body of Christ. We bring the love of Jesus to all we meet. Ministry continues even if we are not meeting in our building. **Adult Forum** (following worship) will continue its study on racism. **Bible study** is on Wednesday nights at 6:30 via Zoom. We will continue with a study in the New Testament beginning with the book of Colossians.

The Women of Immanuel will continue to have their **Gather Bible Study** on the fourth Wednesday of the month and WOI will continue with their ministries as we all continue to love and serve God.

Wednesday, January 6, we will celebrate Epiphany with the Synod. This Epiphany worship service will be led by 13 of the bishops of the ELCA (those elected in 2019 - including our own Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee). May this worship service bring God's Spirit of surprise, grace, and wonder to you. You will find the livestream of it on our [Facebook page](#) at 5:00 pm on January 6.

January 24, 2021 will be our **Annual Meeting** following worship on Zoom. I encourage you all to be a part of this important meeting. If you are not on Zoom but have a computer that you use for Facebook and email, please contact someone from Council to help you use Zoom. It is a quick and easy click of the mouse! It will be a great addition to your week to join us for worship and adult forum on Sundays and Bible Study on Wednesday nights.

May you feel the light and love of Jesus, our Savior and our God, in all you do as we begin a new year, and may you know my prayers are with you.

May God bless you in the new year and always,

Pastor Leslie

From our Council president:

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

- As Immanuel’s (God with us) congregation looks to the future, we have hope, knowing that God knows the plans God has for us.
- In spite of not being together during most of 2020, many ministries have continued at Immanuel, including quilts and kits for Lutheran World Relief, meals for those who need them, masks made and distributed, garden produce for our community, bread for the foodbank, bags of necessities for people who are homeless, contributions to our local foodbank, monetary help for a local family who needed propane, Christmas gifts for two local families, preaching, Wednesday night Bible Study, Adult Forum, phone calls, funerals, book study
- As we look forward to being together in 2021, we pray for God’s guidance in the ministries we should continue and also add. What are some things that you would like to see in Immanuel’s future?
- The virus Covid has challenged all of us in new and different ways. One of the challenges that affects Immanuel is the income line in our budget. Many of our costs were lessened this past year, but our pastor and secretary remain at full salary, heat and power are less, but still paid. As always, our struggle is continuing to fund a full time Pastor. We have been in these circumstances before and we have always come together and fulfilled our call. Please prayerfully commit to this again so that Immanuel Lutheran Church can continue its mission in our community. We are grateful for all who have continued giving during this past year. It is never too late to support our church budget.
- November Income: \$ 10,285.21
 - November Expenses: \$ 9,158.21
 - Income over expenses: \$ 1,127.00
 - 2020 Year to date: (\$ 8,294.73) Expenses over Income
- We are all looking forward to worshipping together once again. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions of how we can enhance our online Zoom services, please let Pastor Leslie or Nancy Workman know.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council
Nancy Workman, President

BISHOP'S MESSAGE

Dear Beloveds,

For this new year, the synod staff has adopted a working statement. We are excited to share it with you and we hope that you may use it and adapt it in your context and community:

“Trusting in the Spirit, we are walking together as God’s people so that all may discover and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus.”

“Trusting in the Spirit... Martin Luther writes in the Small Catechism regarding the third article of the Apostles’ Creed,

“I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel ...” As people of God, we know that doubts, concerns, worry, frustration and so many other things get in the way of following Jesus. But even when we do not have the strength or even the faith to carry on, God still calls us through the Spirit. As we hear and live into the good news that God comes to us – daily – hourly – every minute of every day, we are carried through the Spirit.

...we are walking together as God’s people ...

As I have said before, the word “synod” comes from two Greek words: sun- ‘together’ + hodos ‘way’. I love the image of walking together – of helping someone up when they stumble, of holding hands when it is difficult to see the way forward, of cheering on those who are in the front and encouraging those who are in the back – one huge Jesus-following gathering. This, of course, does not mean that we always agree. And it does not mean that we won’t have hard conversations. All of this is part of being in relationship (if you don’t have conversation anymore, you don’t have much of a relationship). But together, we, as the people of God, walk together, knowing that we are on a journey with Christ, knowing that we are Holy Community together.

...so that all may discover and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus.”

Have you ever seen a baby discover their hands for the first time? Suddenly they are moving them around and laughing, curling their fingers, inspecting their palms, sticking them in their mouths. The gift of hands was something they never even comprehended before and suddenly – there they are. Right in front of their eyes.

Have you ever heard someone who recently heard the good news of Jesus express their wonder and amazement at who God is and who they are in God’s eyes? They suddenly see the world, themselves, each other, and God in a totally new way.

Sometimes those of us who have been around for a while, we forget. We forget the wonder, the beauty, the sheer joy of experiencing and participating in what God through Jesus is doing in this world of ours. As people of God, we are called to open our hearts, open our very beings, to see and hear and feel and experience and participate in what God is doing among us through Jesus. We are called to laugh, to inspect, to taste what God is doing in this amazing world we have been given. And we are called to share the good news of what we see God is up to among us and the communities that surround us *so that* all may discover and participate.

Dear Beloveds, all of us on the synod staff are thankful for you as we live and dance in the Spirit, walk with you, and continue to live into the amazing grace of God through Jesus Christ our Savior.

In the Amazement of Epiphany, ***Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee***

UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:

- **January 6, Wednesday** - Epiphany celebration with Synod on Zoom. 5:00 p.m. on Immanuel's Facebook page.
- **January 13 & 20** (Wednesdays) - Bible Study at 6:30 via Zoom.
- **January 24** - Annual Meeting after worship on Zoom.
- **January 27** - *Gather* Study at 6:30 on Zoom

To connect to Worship services on Zoom, go to www.immanuellutheraneverson.com click on Worship and scroll down to the Zoom hyperlink.

January Birthdays

1/8 Connie Gates
1/13 Edwin Hidden
1/14 Bonnie Moors
1/18 Clarice Solvik
1/28 David Smith
1/30 Linell Williams
1/31 Cole Roman

January Anniversaries

1/14 Paul & Sue Hookham

January Scripture Readings

January 3 – 2 Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18

January 10 - Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 17 – 2 Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 24 - 3 Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5
10 Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 31 - 4 Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111 (10)
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28