

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Fellowship Sunday

December 22, 2024

10:00 a.m.

THE VISION STATEMENT FOR IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*As the body of Christ, renewed by the Holy Spirit as a living community of believers, we are committed to sharing the love of Christ and the good news of salvation. We build relationships with others in the **Community Around Us**, while nurturing the **Community Among Us**, so all may know of and grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.*

Building on Christ, Equipping for the Future

The Five-fold function of the Church: **Worship, Education, Fellowship, Service, and Evangelism**

WELCOME VISITORS!

Today is a special day for us because you are here. We wish to share with you our source of strength, hope, and joy.

We refer to what follows not as worship (we gather to give something to God) but as Divine Service. We are here to receive from God. We are aware of our need. We are aware of God's love and compassion. Throughout the Divine Service, Pastor will offer brief explanation on what is happening and why. *It is our desire to share with you our tradition of worship and the richness we find in it.*

Gathering as God people (The Church) is essential to the life of disciples. It is not optional. As disciples gather, we love and are love. Life in community is a hallmark of Christian life.

Organ Prelude –

“Lovely Appear”

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Opening Hymn #332 – “Savior of the Nations, Come”



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
 3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
 4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
 of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
 vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
 king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
 Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 God was there up - on His throne.
 His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

7 From the manger newborn light
 Shines in glory through the night.
 Darkness there no more resides;
 In this light faith now abides.

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340–397; German version, Martin Luther, 1483–1546; (sts. 1–2): tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812–76; (sts. 3, 6): tr. Lutheran Service Book, 2006; (sts. 4–5, 8): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001; (st. 7): tr. Gifford A. Grobien, 1973
 Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter
 Text (sts. 3, 6–7): © 2006 Concordia Publishing House; (sts. 4–5, 8): © 1978 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002312
 Text (sts. 1–2) and tune: Public domain

Divine Service, Setting Three

Invocation

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Stand

It is in the Sacrament that God gives us His undeserved love. We begin the Divine Service with a remembrance of that moment when God gave to us all the blessing of Jesus life, death, and resurrection. We may gather before God in hope because of what God has done for us.

P In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

The lighting of the Advent Wreath is a tradition observed in the weeks leading up the Christmas. As each week passes and a candle lit, we prepare our hearts to celebrate God's greatest gift to us, The Savior.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

John 1:5, 9; 3:16; Psalm 36:5–9

P We light the fourth Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

C **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

P The fourth Advent candle has been known as the angel candle and the candle of love. As our Advent season soon ends, we await the angelic message of the good news of a Savior. We have come to know the love of the one true God this season and always as we have prepared to celebrate His birth. We know God's promises come to fruition in Jesus, who later made known His Father's love in His being born into this world; in His life, ministry, teaching, preaching, healing; and ultimately in His dying and rising. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

C **The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

P Guided by the light of love, we respond with the psalmist: "Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds.

C **Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast You save, O LORD.**

P How precious is Your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.

C **They feast on the abundance of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your delights.**

P For with You is the fountain of life;

C **in Your light do we see light."**

Christians are not perfect people. We are forgiven people. Here we again seek to lay our sins at the cross of Jesus and hear the Words of God that give forgiveness and peace.

Confession and Absolution

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Kneel/Stand

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

The pastor speaks the absolution not because he is holier than the people of the congregation. He does so because the congregation has appointed him to the office of the public ministry. His is to speak to the people God's Word as He has revealed it in Scripture.

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

The Divine Service is divided into two parts. The first is the Service of the Word. And the second is the Service of the Sacrament. We will not have the Service of the Sacrament today. In the Service of the Word, we focus on the Bible, which is God speaking to us today. Through His Word, our faith grows because He is active in His Word.

Service of the Word

Introit means to enter. After the confession of sins and the hearing of God's forgiveness with his people, the pastor enters the railing that separates the Altar from the rest of the Church. Through God's forgiveness and love we can come directly into God's presence without fear.

Introit

1 Samuel 2:1b, 2, 5b-7; antiphon: Luke 1:46b-47



My soul magni- | fies the Lord,*
and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.
My mouth derides my | enemies,*
because I rejoice in your sal- | vation.
There is none holy | like the LORD;*
there is none besides you; there is no rock | like our God.
The barren has borne | seven,*
but she who has many children | is forlorn.
The LORD kills and | brings to life;*
he brings down to Sheol and | raises up.
The LORD makes poor and | makes rich;*
he brings low and | he exalts.
Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
My soul magni- | fies the Lord,*
and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.

Having entered the Altar area we greet our King, Jesus. The Kyrie was a common greeting when meeting a King and asking for his blessing.

Kyrie



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The Hymn of Praise is a song we offer to God in thanksgiving and worship for the forgiveness and compassion shown to us. Hymns (songs) in the Lutheran Church were written also to teach the faith and to remind believers of God’s Word.

Hymn of Praise #357 – “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”



4 O come, Thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, Free them from
5 O come, Thou Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen

Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny That trust Thy might - y
wide our heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that

pow'r to save, And give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.
leads on high, And close the path to mis - er - y.

Refrain

Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el

Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent.; Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710, Köln; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–66, alt.
Tune: French, 15th cent.
Text and tune: Public domain

The Salutation is the greeting of disciples to one another. In the first century church, this was how believers said “hello.”

The Collect of the Day is a prayer that sums up the needs of the people of God for that Sunday. It is a “collection” of the thoughts for the day.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And with thy spirit.

P Let us pray.

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Our Divine Service typically has three readings from the Bible. One is from the Old Testament (written before the Birth of Jesus), one from an Epistle (epistle means letter. These are letters written by the Apostles to the early congregation), and one from a Gospel (Gospels are the written account of Jesus life and work). The Bible is how God speaks to His people today. The Scriptures are of divine origin and inerrant. God speaks through them now to instruct, bless, and comfort His people.

Old Testament Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.
³Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
 to the people of Israel.
⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
 in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth.
⁵And he shall be their peace.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

DUET – **“Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending”**
HELMSLEY Thomas Olivers (1725-1799) arr. Sandy Collins
Sandy Collins, Flute & Muriel Hopkins, Piano

Epistle

Hebrews 10:5-10

⁵When Christ came into the world, he said,
 “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
 but a body have you prepared for me;
⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings
 you have taken no pleasure.
⁷Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
 as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

⁸When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

The alleluia verse is a special act of praise just before we hear the Words of Jesus in the Gospel.

Alleluia and Verse



Holy Gospel

Luke 1:39-45

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.



³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The Apostle's Creed was not written by the apostles themselves. It is a summary of the teaching of the apostles. This creed served as the first "textbook" on teaching the Christian faith to new Christians and to children being raised in the faith.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

Sit

The Hymn of the Day is chosen by the preacher to give additional insight to the message he will deliver. Note again how the song teaches faith.

Hymn of the Day #349 – “Hark the Glad Sound”



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, In Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Thy wel - come



prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be - fore Him
 soul to cure, And with the trea - sures of His
 shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es



throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.
 burst, The i - ron fet - ters yield.
 grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 ring With Thy be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–51
 Tune: Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820
 Text and tune: Public domain

The sermon is a message composed by the pastor to teach the message of the Day's reading or, as today, a special verse chosen by him. His goal is that the hearers receive the same message the original hearer of the passage heard with the same understanding. The pastor will only teach what is God's Word, as given in the Bible.

Sermon

VOLUNTARY – “Once He Came in Blessing” BWV 600
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Offering

(We join with Christians all over the world in worshipping God through the giving of our financial resources. If you are a first-time visitor, you are our guest and we do not expect you to give an offering. For members and friends, the ministry of this congregation is completely dependent upon your generous giving. Our offering is a significant act of worship.)

Stand

The Offertory is a song where we offer not just treasure to God but our entire selves to Him as His disciples. It is an act of love which is a response to His love.

Offertory



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Prayer is our speaking to God at His behest. God has spoken to us in His Word and desires for us to speak to Him in prayer. Communication is crucial to any healthy relationship. Faith is a relationship with God. Disciples may bring any praise, thanksgiving, and request to God for anyone.

Prayer Of the Church

O Lord, there is none like You in holiness, constancy and might; yet, You exercise Your power for the salvation of sinners. As we draw near to the celebration of Jesus' birth, fill our hearts with gratitude that Your Son humbled Himself and became flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, You have done great things for us, looking upon our humble estate and exalting us to be Your children for Jesus' sake. Preserve us by Your Holy Word, that we would properly fear Your name and rejoice in it all our days. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, Your Son from of old was born of Mary in time to be our peace. Grant us repentant hearts, that for His sake we would be at peace with You. Grant also that, forgiven of our sins, we may forgive and be at peace with those around us. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our God, Bethlehem was too small to be among the clans of Judah, yet from it came forth the King of kings. Remember the congregations of Your people where numbers are

small and resources are scarce. Provide for their needs, and remind them that the Lord of lords dwells among them in His Means of Grace. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, You are the Creator of all life. Have mercy on those women who are unable to conceive or who suffer the heartbreak of miscarriage. Be their rock against despair, provide them consolation and purpose in Your Son, and restore them to exult in Your salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, You sent Your Son to shepherd His flock in strength and to be great to the ends of the earth. Grant wisdom to our leaders and peace among the nations, that we may dwell secure. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our God, uphold [and] all who suffer in mind or body. Give them the knowledge of Christ, their Immanuel, who is with them in their trials. Grant them health and healing in accord with Your perfect will. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give You thanks for Your Son, Jesus Christ, who is truly the King of the nations and their desire. He who formed us of clay took on our human nature that He might save us. He came to His own and was rejected by them, yet You established Him as the true cornerstone, tested and precious, that whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame. Grant that, as we recall with thanksgiving His advent in the flesh, we may always confess Him and remain watchful for His advent in glory at the Last Day; for You live and reign, ever one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

This particular prayer is the one Jesus taught to His disciple when they asked Him to teach them how to pray. While it is an example of prayer, it holds a special place in the hearts of believers.

Lord's Prayer

**☐ Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the Kingdom
And the Power and the Glory
Forever and ever. Amen**

Announcements

Salutation And Benedicamus

We are nearing the end of the Divine Service. God has given to us richly today and we are lifted up, healed, and depart with Joy to serve Him by loving all others in our daily life. The Benediction is from the Old Testament. It is one we share with millions of Christians around the world. It reminds us that God is with us every day and everywhere.

P The Lord be with you.

C **And with thy spirit.**

A Bless we the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn #354 – “Arise, O Christian People”



1 A - rise, O Chris - tian peo - ple! Pre - pare your - selves to -
 2 Pre - pare the way be - fore Him; Pre - pare for Him the
 3 The hum - ble heart and low - ly God rais - es up on
 4 Pre - pare my heart, Lord Je - sus; Turn not from me a -



day; Pre - pare to greet the Sav - ior, Who takes your
 best. Cast out what would of - fend Him, This great, this
 high; Be - neath His feet in ter - ror The haugh - ty
 side, And help me to re - ceive You This bless - ed



sins a - way. To us by grace a - lone The
 heav'n - ly guest. Make straight, make plain the way: The
 soul shall lie. The heart sin - cere and right, That
 Ad - vent - tide. From stall and man - ger low Come



truth and light were giv - en; The prom - ised Lord from
 low - ly val - leys rais - ing, The heights of pride a -
 heeds God's in - vi - ta - tion And makes true prep - a -
 now to dwell with - in me; I'll sing Your prais - es



heav - en To all the world is shown.
 bas - ing, His path all e - ven lay.
 ra - tion— It is the Lord's de - light.
 glad - ly And forth Your glo - ry show.

Text: Valentin Thilo, 1607–62; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt.
 Tune: New Catechismus Gesangbüchlein, 1598, Hamburg, alt.
 Text and tune: Public domain

*There is much much more to our Divine Service than what could be presented here.
 There is much more about our Savior to know than can be taught in one Service.
 We hope that you will return to know us and our Lord better. We wish to share all
 the blessing of God's people with you.*

Organ Postlude –

“People Look East” BESANÇON

French Carol

Roger Lau (b. 1943)

Those Serving Today:

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Pastor | Rev. Charles Minetree |
| Officiant | |
| Lay Reader | Sandy Collins |
| Director of Music | Muriel Hopkins |
| Altar Guild | |

Birthdays this Week:

25 Kristin Hermann
27 Lynn Wegner

Anniversaries:**This Week at Immanuel:**

| | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|--|
| Sunday | December 22 | 9:00 am | Sunday school, ages 3-12 |
| Fellowship Sunday | | 10:00 am | Worship |
| | | Post worship | Adult Bible study |
| | | | CANCELLED |
| <i>Tuesday</i> | <i>December 24</i> | <i>9 pm</i> | <i>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</i> |
| Thursday | December 26 | 7 pm | Choir practice CANCELLED |
| Sunday | December 29 | 9:00 am | Sunday school, ages 3-12 |
| | | 10:00 am | Worship |
| | | Post worship | Adult Bible Class |

A memorial donation in honor of Ray Will was received from Susan E. Will

Ministry Notes

To all who have already turned in their 2025 pledge cards, we thank you. We encourage those who have not yet returned their pledge cards to please send them in so that the budget for 2025 can be completed. If you have misplaced your card, there will be blanks in the Narthex.

Sunday Adult Bible Class

We meet immediately after 10 AM Divine Service in the conference room. Our topic will be examining insights given in the book: **Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes**, Cultural Studies in the Gospels by Kenneth E, Bailey. We will gain insights into some of the Bible passages that are covered in the gospels.

Wednesday Lunch Bible Class

Our Wednesday Lunch Bible Class has decided not to meet in December due to the busy schedules. We will resume in January.

Adult Confirmation Class

Pastor Minetree is teaching an Adult Confirmation Class every Monday at 7:00 pm. In this class we cover the basic teaching of the Christian Faith. Feel free to drop by to join us for one or more classes.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Elaine Mueller, who had hip surgery and is recovering well
- Sharon Minetree, who had good test results
- Pastor Elliott Robertson, who is having bypass surgery
- For complete recovery of Barbara Griffa, June Dennis' sister who is in rehab
- Sylvia Holland, a family relative of June Dennis, for her complete recovery from a stroke
- For peace in Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, and Russia
- Bonnie and Joe Castrilli as she cares for her husband who has dementia
- Ginger Glindemann for family members who are being treated for cancer
- Winnie Kruelle who has been diagnosed with cancer
- Naomi Kruelle for health reasons
- Rosemarie Wilson, the daughter of Filleseta James, for return of strength in her left leg
- Joseph Woah-tee missing, and whereabouts unknown



POINTSETTIAS WERE GIVEN TO THE WORSHIP OF OUR LORD

In Glory to God – Guenter & Elaine Schwab
For Peace in the World – Gabriel & Moni Tenabe
To the Glory of God and in Memory of Loved Ones – Lillian Noel

In memory of

Parents and grandparents, Floyd and Peggy Bland and Kenneth Belz – the Bland Family

Ervin Dietrich and Ruth Dietrich – Stacey Dietrich

Husband, Ted – Carolyn Henn

Our parents, Efiok and Affiog Adah, and George and Annie Flood – Denise Adah

Our sisters, Brenda Eaton Edwards Smith and Vanessa Eaton Lemma – Denise Adah

Beloved husband and father, Richard Goeller – The Goeller Family

Those members of our congregation who have gone before us to their eternal home this year – The Goeller

Family

Mother, father, brother, and husband – Cathy Belz

In honor of

My children and grandchildren, Carolyn Henn

John Rebstock – Phyllis Rebstock

Our granddaughters, Madilyn and Claire Ruble – Jerry and Mary Ruble

Our beloved Pumpkin, Jazzie, Tillie, Shelby, Lulu, Twinkletoes, Tinkerbelle, Maya, Tulip, Vows Kitty, and Spike – Laura Pickering

In loving memory of

*John Pickering, Paul and Alice Stoltman, Herbert and Mary Pickering, Raymond and Bessie Pickering,
Harold and Edith Hurley – Laura L. Pickering*