



The

Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

December 2015

The Gleaner is a publication of:

Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Receiving The Gleaner Online:

If you would like to receive The Gleaner by email, please call or email the office. It's also available on Immanuel's website and Facebook page.

Gleaner Submissions:

The deadline for submitting articles and information is the 20th of each month.



Mission

**Joyfully Christian.
Humbly Serving.
Boldly Loving.**

Letter from Pastor Dana

Advent is a time to celebrate an extraordinary birth. A birth that changed all of creation. It is one where the trees dance. The animals rejoice. The stars shine. The oceans flow. The angels announce. We know this birth is so extraordinary that we go out of our way each year to celebrate in style. We decorate, light up our homes, cook in abundance, celebrate with family and friends, and give generously.

This birth is extraordinary and makes us want to be extraordinary in our celebration, but the first Christmas wasn't perfectly festive. It is an unwed teenager who just gave birth with no place to lay her head but on a cold dirty floor of the barn covered with hay that is itchy to the skin. She is with the man she plans to marry – though they are not yet married. Neither of them planned this pregnancy. The man she plans to marry isn't even the father.

Why are they in a stable? Because the government drove them to Bethlehem for a census... can you imagine being fully pregnant about to give birth and now you have to travel on the back of a donkey thanks to Caesar Augustus?

The only place to lay their newborn is in a feeding trough. Luckily they had some clothes to swaddle around him before laying him in a manger. Christmas comes from humble beginnings. The humble beginnings have turned into a chaotic cooking and money spending reality. We are anticipating our honored traditions of this time. We want Christmas to be perfect. But what is perfect? There is only one thing that is perfect. Christ. In the midst of an un-perfect messy world Christ breaks into creation. This is an extraordinary birth.

So, in the midst of high expectations, pain, fear, worry, final exams, loss of job, moving, divorce, deep mourning of loved ones we continue to light candles. One after another. Each week bringing more light into the darkness. The extraordinary birth isn't the end of the story. The death on the cross isn't the end. The resurrection isn't the end. There is an advent: Christ is coming again!

In hopeful expectation,
Pastor Dana

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT...

November is a month of giving thanks. I have seen a number of friends posting a thankful note on Facebook every day. Although I've not gotten on board with that, I do think of all the things around me for which I'm thankful. As we enter this season of waiting, I encourage all of you to look inside, and to really ask yourself, "For what can I give thanks?" I often think that God has a way of bringing me back to a place of thankfulness. When I'm faced with situations that are causing large amounts of stress or anxiety, there's always a sign that brings me back down to reality. It focuses my energy, and gives me pause and perspective. And I truly believe that these are God-moments.

Immanuel hosted the first week of the ICRH for the season, and working there for a variety of shifts, I can say with assurance, I have many 'things' for which to be thankful. Our congregation, with the help of His House, rallied and provided a great opening week for the shelter. We host the annual Thanksgiving dinner, and the outpouring of thanks is noteworthy. Finally, Christmas Outreach is another example of a true collaborative and community effort, and as I contemplate my gratitude list, I count this as one of the items. And that my friends, is only TWO months of community outpouring from all of us.

In this season of giving thanks as we await the birth of Jesus, please prayerfully consider your time and talents. Can you give more time to another area? Are your talents well matched to the area you're focusing your talents? As we move into the new year, with new programs and program evaluations on the horizon, your openness to change is paramount. When the question comes your way, be prepared to answer the call.

Many blessings for a happy and healthy holiday season, as we await the birth of our savior!
Amy Powell, President



Christmas Outreach Needs Your Help!!!

"Coordinating the Community for Christmas Giving"



Monetary Donations are Needed:

Send your check payable to: Christmas Outreach to
Immanuel Lutheran Church, 320 S. Bradley, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 OR
deposit it at any local branch of Isabella Bank. (501 (c) 3 status)

Items are Needed:

The following items must be NEW or gently used and clean and can be dropped off at the following locations between NOW and Dec. 5th:

Winter Coats.....	St. Johns Episcopal, Clothing Inc., First United Methodist Immanuel Lutheran, Thrive Church, Mt. Pleasant Community Church
Hats & Mittens.....	First Presbyterian
Boots.....	First Church of the Nazarene
Linens.....	Sacred Heart, Central Free Methodist Church, Potter's House
Christmas Decorations.....	Immanuel Lutheran
Stockings.....	Winn United Methodist Church
Children's Books.....	Unitarian Universalist, CMU Library, St. Mary's
Jeans.....	Morey Courts, McLaren Hospital, Clothing Inc.

If you have multiple items to drop off or cannot find the location above, please bring your donations to Immanuel Lutheran Monday-Friday between 8am-12pm or 1pm-3pm.

*PLEASE NOTE that we are NOT distributing toys, household items or general clothing this year.
Please limit your donations to the items listed above. Thank You!

Volunteers are Needed:

When? Dec. 7-10 (10am-4pm) & Dec. 11 & 12 (8am- 7pm)

All individuals or groups that are interested in volunteering MUST schedule a time in advance.
For more information, visit www.immanuelmp.com (click Reach Out)
Questions can be directed at christmas_outreach@yahoo.com or (989)773-4204

Ministry with Each Other



JC's Cafe December Schedule

Dec. 6.....3-5 Decorate the church (ALL are Welcome!)
Dec. 13...Bake Sale after 10am service (NO JCs)
Dec. 20...White Elephant Christmas Party 3-5pm
Dec. 27-30....Lansing Gathering- meet at church, 12:30
Jan 3....3-5pm, Undecorate the church
Jan. 8-9...Winter Retreat at Eversole's



On Sunday, December 27, Pastor Dana will be at the Youth Gathering in Lansing so we will be welcoming Pastor David Sprang to preach and preside.

Theological Discussion with Pastor Dana

Wednesdays at 10:30am
PLEASE JOIN US!!!!

(Class will be canceled on December 23 & 30)



Thank you to ALL who helped make our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner a success! Without your donations of time and food, this would not have been possible. Blessings to you!!!



The office will be CLOSED on December 24, 25, 31 and January 1 for the Holidays. Regular office hours will resume on Monday, Jan. 4th.

Praises and Pinches Form

As a congregation, we are committed to voicing our praises and "not sitting on our pinches"! To be a healthy, faithful community, we need to be open with one another about what we expect in all areas of our life together. If there is anything in our community life that brings you joy or causes you to be concerned, please share your feelings and questions. Thank you for taking the time to communicate about ways we are doing well in our ministry together at Immanuel, and the areas that need attention. Your Mutual Ministry Team needs your feedback In order to best respond to your needs. If you would like a personal response to your praise or pinch, please be sure to sign this form at the bottom.

To discuss a concern directly with the Mutual Ministry Team or one of the Team members, please indicate below.

Praises: _____

Pinches: _____

Desired Outcome: _____

A specific question I would like answered: _____

Name _____

(If you would like a direct response to your Praise or Pinch)

Please return this form to the Praises and Pinches Box located in the Narthex.

Ministry with Each Other



What Is A Care Receiver?

We all experience challenges in life – time when we could benefit from confidential, Christ-centered care and support on a weekly basis. Stephen Ministers at Immanuel can provide a Care Receiver with the emotional and spiritual care we need when faced with a crisis or difficulty such as –

- Loss of a loved one
- Hospitalization
- Separation or divorce
- Loneliness or discouragement
- Spiritual crisis
- Unemployment or job crisis
- A chronic illness
- A terminal illness
- Aging and/or homebound
- Birth, adoption, miscarriage or infertility
- Relocation
- Recovery after an accident or disaster
- Countless other life challenges
- Men will be paired with men; women with women.

If you are in need of care or know someone who does, please contact Pastor Dana.

Following are Immanuel's newly recommissioned Stephen Ministers:
Keith Allen, Annette Foster, Kathy Gallaher, Cindy Keller and Trudy Staples

Compassionate Hearts Ministry Endowment Fund

Compassionate Hearts Ministry has been established to help those in our Immanuel family who are experiencing a difficult time by providing support for them thru a one - time gift. This gift is designed to allow them a chance to take a break from a painful or overwhelming situation and a chance to recharge and reflect.

Our Compassionate Hearts Endowment Fund principle is very close to the \$10,000 goal. The principle will remain in place while the interest it earns will become available for our ministry's gifts of support.

Please consider making a year-end tax deductible donation towards this ministry. You can give your support to Compassionate Hearts Ministry today on-line at immanuelmp.com and click on the \$ sign or you can give by check. Donation envelopes can be found in the narthex. Remember Compassionate Hearts Ministry when making donations for memorials, honorariums, or remembrances.

Thank you for your caring donation! For more information or questions please contact Carole Heydenburg or Kathy Gallaher.

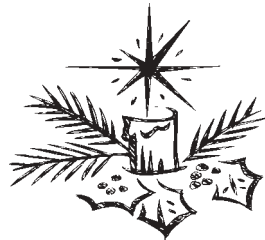
Ministry with Each Other



December 20 at 9:00 a.m. we will be lifting praise to God through lessons and carols. Please be sure to sign up for the service if you would like to read a lesson! Starting December 6, we will have the readings and the signup sheets in the Narthex.



Christmas Eve Service Times
6:00 p.m. Family Service
9:00 p.m. Candlelight Service



Advent Service

December 1, 8 & 15
at 5:30pm

We are using a service titled, Prayer around the Cross. It includes: scripture, meditation, music, and prayer. We hope you will join us!

Longest Night Service

December 20 at 5:00 p.m



This Advent we will be offering a special service to bring light into the lives of those who miss loved ones during the Christmas season and/or for personal reasons don't find the Christmas season joyful. It will be a service with candle lighting, anointing, and healing prayer. We all seek light in the midst of darkness so please join us on Sunday, December 20 at 5:00 p.m. for our Longest Night service.

Immanuel Lutheran Church is pleased to offer an electronic option for making regular offerings. Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account. Our new electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation.

If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis.



Visit our website, www.immanuelmp.com click on the money sign (\$) and sign up! Please contact the church office if you have questions.



The Best Christmas Present Ever!! **Children's Christmas Program**

The Worship Wednesday Children (pre-K through twelfth graders), Little Lambs, and Totally His will be presenting their Christmas musical, *The Best Christmas Present Ever*, on Sunday, December 13, during the 10:00 worship service. Watch as a family learns what the BEST Present truly is at Christmas. Refreshments to follow after the service in the Fellowship Hall.

Christmas Program Rehearsals:

Wednesday December 9 – 6-7:30pm

Saturday December 12 – 10am-12:30pm



Youth Bake Sale **Sunday December 13th**

Pick up some sweet treats and help the High School Youth fund their transportation to Charleston, West Virginia this summer July 8-16th! Donations are accepted for the holiday treats!



Immanuel Lutheran Church has created an online directory in addition to our paper directory for easy access to everyone's contact information. This directory consists of family groups, and member profiles which you will soon gain access to. We are very excited to get this started!

Please be aware that you will be getting an email from info@onlinechurchdirectory.com!!! You don't want to miss this one!



- 1st David McCollom
Kathy Wyman
- 5th Isabella Wegener
- 6th Marilyn Courter
John Lorand
- 8th Gaylord Courter
Bonnie Schaeffer
Annette Foster
- 9th Brad Long
- 10th Lorraine Tubbs
- 11th John McClintic
- 12th Ruth Magnell
Kim Moss
Christopher Fultz
- 14th Luke Karr
Dale Leider
- 15th Keith Spycher
- 16th Christian Wang
Kirsten Weber
- 18th Judy Smith
- 19th Jim Phillips
- 20th Sophie LaBelle
Maude LaBelle
Carter Hoffman
- 21st Diane Clise
Dave Ebert
Ben Plouff
- 22nd Vigdis Boasson
Sandy Warriner
Billie Plouff
Chuck McCollom
- 26th Jason Tomko
- 28th Emily Little
Una Ebert
- 29th Gary Reedy
Cheryl Hess
- 30th Dawn Polanco

December Worship Helpers

Cantors

- 6 Amy Powell
- 13 no cantor- Children's Program
- 20 no cantor- Lessons & Carols
- 27 Sarah Gallaher

Counters

- 6 Jodie Mitchell-Beach & Harry Plouff
- 13 John Emmons & John Warriner
- 20 Chuck McCollom & Sue French
- 27 Jacque Jackson & John Lorand

Altar Guild

- 6 Judy Emmons & Bonnie Berthold
- 13 Billie Plouff & Deb Reimer
- 20 Ann Ferguson & Bonnie Schaeffer
- 24 Bonnie Berthold & Paula Krueger
- 27 Denise Little & Linda Wicander

Projector

- 6 Dan Digmann
- 13 Gabe Goodrich
- 20 Deb LaBlance
- 27 Amy Powell

Nursery Attendants (9:00 & 11:00)

list not available at time of printing

Greeters (9:00 & 11:00)

list not available at time of printing

Assisting Ministers

- 6 (9:00) Mary Hageman
(11:00) Natalie Douglas
- 13 (10:00) Amy Powell
- 20 (9:00) Chris Schuster
(11:00) Natalie Douglas
(5:00) Volunteer Needed
- 24 (6:00) Amy Powell
(9:00) Meaghan McCollow
- 27 (10:00) Chris Schuster

Ushers (9:00)

- 6 Carl Graef, Bill Jensen & Ruth Magnell
- 13 (10:00) Ruth Magnell, Ruth Magnell & Rose Prasad
- 20 Carl Graef, Bill Jensen & Sam Staples
- 24 (6:00pm) The Geisthardt family
(9:00) Paul & Jan Kruska
- 27 (10:00) Carl Graef, Bill Jensen & Ruth Magnell

Ushers (11:00)

list not available at time of printing

Special Sunday Worship Time

Mark your calendar! Two Sundays in December will be a joint Sunday morning 10:00am service!
Sunday, December 13 – 10:00 am (Children's Program)
Sunday, December 27 – 10:00 am

NOISY OFFERING

The Noisy Offering, on December 27, will go toward the Association of Interfaith Ministries (AIM).

Contributions may be made in the Noisy Offering jar in the Narthex throughout the month.

