



The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

December 2017

The Gleaner is a publication of:

Immanuel Lutheran Church
320 S. Bradley St.
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Phone: (989) 773-4204
Email: office@immanuelmp.com
Website: immanuelmp.com

Office Hours:
Monday-Friday 8am-3pm
The Office will be CLOSED
on Dec 25, Dec 26 & Jan 1.

Pastor: Dana Hendershot
Layout and Editing:
Andrea Redmond

Immanuel has an online church directory. Visit our website and check it out!
Contact the office for your username and password.

Mission

Joyfully Christian.
Humbly Serving.
Boldly Loving.



A Letter from Pastor Dana...

Dear Friends in Christ,

I love wrapping Christmas presents! A wrapped gift brings a sense of care, beauty, and curiosity. For thousands of years God's people lived in curiosity and hope of a Messiah. They didn't know anything about Christmas or Mary or Joseph. They didn't know angels would be messengers and a little boy would be placed in a manger. It was a mystery to them - a hope - an advent.

Each year we gather together and celebrate this advent. Knowing that we too live in a new advent. God's story of coming among us is not over. So Christians all over the world take a little extra care with this time of year. As the days grow darker our hope and light in Christ grows brighter. It shines in the little things we do like when we: Invite a lonely friend to church. Sing carols and share cookies with your neighbors. Take someone a meal. Take a soft blanket to a new baby! Offer to clean up someone's yard. I have seen the people of Immanuel do these things not just during Advent but all year long. When we do, we are living out Jesus in our actions - which brings him here among us.

Join us for a very special Advent worship series, "Together in Advent." We gather both young and old into the presence of Jesus! Let's spend this Advent wrapped up together bringing a sense of care, beauty, and curiosity into the world.

In hopeful anticipation,

Pastor Dana Hendershot



From the President...

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

At our Council Retreat in October we met to welcome our new members (Aubyron Anderson, Penny Endres and Ted Tuma) and to get to know each other a little better. We also talked about how we prioritize our focus and energies on growth moving forward. A drive to grow the numbers often leads to the temptation to focus on the church as product and turns growth into a marketing/advertising exercise. We see the shortcomings from this approach: we live in a time where growth in organized churches is shown to mainly come from attracting congregants of other organized churches. Overall the total number of people in organized churches is falling. God's Kingdom is shrinking, and based on the statistics, becoming more inwardly focused.

Immanuel is extraordinarily blessed to be a growing church. Much of that healthy energy comes from a focus on mission – connecting people to Jesus. When we use kingdom growth (not church growth) as a metric, the focus on creating heaven on earth drives us to focus outwards. We connect people to Jesus where they live. Immanuel has such a deep desire to do this – to help change lives. We looked at all the ways we currently do this (Christmas Outreach, Campus Ministry, ICRH, the Thanksgiving Dinner, Play Group, AIM, Food Trucks, mission trips, Stephens Ministers, VBS) and strategized on ways to deepen our outreach into the community in the future. Bottom line, we are working on reaching out. On COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION.

The coming of the Christ child is the greatest example of this principle. God had reigned from afar and had tried via wonders and prophets to convey the kingdom to his children. But after (many) fits and starts, He sent his son to reach us where we were, to show His love in the flesh. To literally touch us with His hands and transform this world. We, too, can be His hands in Mount Pleasant and around the world. I look forward to all we can do. May your Christmas season be a blessed one filled with family, friends and love.

In Him,

Bill Gallaher,
Council President



Ministry with Each Other



Stephen Ministry-Sharing Love

More than a year has passed since Immanuel commissioned five new Stephen Ministers. They have put their skills and compassion to work caring for people in our congregation. It is a blessing to individuals served, to the lay ministers themselves, and to our whole congregation. We thank God that he has given us the gift of these lay ministers!

Perhaps you have wondered:

- “How many people need the kind of care Stephen Ministers provide?”
- “Would my gifts and talents be put to good use as a Stephen Minister?”

We definitely need more trained Stephen Ministers to continue and expand this ministry. Many members are experiencing challenging life situations that would benefit from the one-on-one confidential ministry of Christian caring from a Stephen Minister.

If you are seeking an opportunity to use your God-given gifts in meaningful ministry to others, please prayerfully consider a Stephen Ministry training class. For more information talk with any Stephen Leader: Gail Mitchell, Chris Schuster, Fred Schuster or Pastor Dana.



Sunday, December 3- 9:00 am Traditional Service
11:00am Contemporary Worship Service

Sunday, December 10 –9:00 am Traditional Service
11:00am Contemporary Worship Service

Sunday, December 17- 10:00 Service (Children’s Christmas Program)

Saturday, December 24- 10:00am Lessons & Carols Service
7:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 31 – 10:00 am New Year’s Eve Worship Service

Decorating for Christmas

On Sunday, December 10 at 1pm, we are asking for volunteers to help the Youth decorate the church for the Christmas season. Please come lend us a hand, if you are able!

Lessons & Carols

The morning of December 24 at 10:00am, we will be lifting praise to God through lessons & carols. Please be sure to sign up for the service if you would like to read a lessons! There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

(Ministry with Each Other, Continued)

Theological Conversation with Pastor Dana

This discussion group will meet on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Capital Room. This group will NOT meet on December 27th.

The Noisy Offering

The noisy offering on December 24 will be given to The Habitat for Humanity. A collection jar is located in the Narthex throughout the month for your convenience.



SAVE THE DATE!

Maker Fun Factory VBS is coming July 16-20, 2018. If you are interested in volunteering, please email claire.e.torgerson@gmail.com!

December Birthdays

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Kathy Wyman
David McCollom |
| 5 | Isabella Wegener |
| 6 | John Lorand |
| 8 | Bonnie Schaeffer
Annette Foster |
| 9 | Brad Long |
| 10 | Lorraine Tubbs |
| 11 | John McClintic |
| 12 | Christopher Fultz Jr.
Ruth Magnell
Kimberly Moss |
| 14 | Luke Karr
Dale Leider |
| 15 | Keith Spycher |
| 16 | Kirsten Weber
Luke Douglas
Laney Douglas
Grace Torgerson |
| 18 | Syd Smith |
| 19 | Jim Phillips |
| 20 | Carter Hoffman
Maude LaBelle
Sophie LaBelle |
| 21 | Diane Clise
Dave Ebert
Ben Plouff |
| 22 | Vigdis Boasson
Chuck McCollom
Sandy Warriner
Billie Plouff |
| 26 | Jason Tomko |
| 27 | Kip Ferguson |
| 28 | Una Ebert
Emily Little |
| 29 | Cheryl Hess |
| 30 | Dawn Polanco |

Ministry with Each Other



The holiday season is upon us. You are invited to take some intentional time in spiritual contemplation with "Advent Reflections". Linda Wicander is leading this program at the Wesley Center on CMU's campus on Thursday mornings at 10:00 a.m. We will gather for the next three Thursdays (December 7, 15, 21) at 10 a.m. for a quiet devotional period. Everyone is welcome to join us.

Youth Pop Can Drive to cease

The youth would like to thank everyone who has donated cans and bottles throughout the years! At this time, however, we have decided to end this collection and focus on other efforts.

Where do I drop off donations???

*Plastic grocery bags for CCN can be dropped into the baskets under the benches outside of the office.

Thank You!!!



- December**
- Dec. 3- meet at Clothing INC
 - Dec. 10- 12:30- decorate church
6:00- Community Worship
 - Dec. 17- 10:00- Bake Sale
3:00- Christmas Party
 - Dec. 24- NO Youth Group
 - Dec. 27-30- Gathering in Lansing
 - Jan. 7- 3:00 un-decorate church

Community Input: Praises and Pinches

To be a healthy, faithful community, Immanuel needs to be open with what we expect in all areas of life. If there is anything in our community life that brings joy or causes concern, please share any feelings and questions. Thank you for taking the time to communicate ways we are doing well in our ministry at Immanuel and the areas that need attention. Your Mutual Ministry Team needs your feedback. 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: _____

Is it OK to publish in Gleaner? ___ Yes ___ No (Name must be posted if you wish for this to appear in Gleaner.)

A specific question I would like answered: _____

Name _____

Ministry with the Community & World



We give thanks....

Immanuel celebrated Thanksgiving the way it has for 31 years, we went Beyond the Walls! Sixty-one volunteers from our church as well as community members helped contribute to the event which served 120 guests to a delicious dinner of turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, rolls, corn, squash, beans, and of course, pumpkin pie and other scrumptious desserts. A total of approximately 150 meals were served to our guests and the volunteers who stayed to eat.

The food had been donated and prepared by 57 volunteers mostly from Immanuel. Once again, Ric's Food Center so generously donated 15 turkeys for our event. Other business sponsors that helped make this day possible were The Comfort Inn, PEAK, Robaire's, Isabella Bank, Rent-Rite, Gordon Food Service, Freddie's Tavern, Granger Waste Service and Sam's Club. Thrivent Financial Group also once again helped by underwriting a large portion of our expenses. Thank you to all of the corporate and individual donors that made this day possible. We could not have done this event without your support.

Our guests truly enjoyed a day of fellowship and wonderful food. Guests ranged in age from 4 years old to 97 years young. It is always a pleasure to see so many familiar faces each year as well as meet new guests.

One touching moment came toward the end of the dinner. A young man showed up after we had finished serving and were sending folks home with over-flowing "To Go" boxes. He came up and asked if he was too late to get a plate of food. He told us it was his birthday that day and had not eaten in two days. Of course, we had food for him and plenty of it. We sang him Happy Birthday and loaded him up with plenty of turkey with all the fixings and birthday pies. It's times like this that make this day so special.

Thank you so much for all of the love and support this congregation continues to show. We are so proud of this congregation and all of the Beyond the Walls events we either spearhead or are involved in. God is truly with us.

Billie and Harry Plouff

Jan and Dan Eversole 2017 Thanksgiving Day Dinner Co-Chairs

Ministry with the Community & World

December Volunteer Opportunities

**“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”
- Luke 6:38**

Here are some upcoming outreach opportunities for members of Immanuel to get involved in the local community.

Isabella County Restoration House

Please call 854-0183 if you are interested in helping with the Rotating Homeless Shelter.

The following churches will host the shelter this month:

Community of Christ.....11/26/17-12/10/17

First Church of Christ.....12/10/17-12/18/17

St. Joseph/Wesley (CMU)....12/18/17-12/25/17

Sacred Heart.....12/26/17-1/2/18

Isabella County Restoration House- Day Shelter

(This is located at the former Victory Church on High Street)

Please call 854-0183 if you are interested in volunteering at the Day Shelter

Monday-Saturday 1pm-4:30pm

Sunday 9:30am-1pm

Isabella Community Soup Kitchen

To volunteer with the soup kitchen, call the office at 772-7392 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

***Community Volunteers are especially needed during the busy holiday month of December, including replacing CMU students gone on break.

If you have any ideas for other ways members of Immanuel Lutheran Church can get involved in serving our local community, please contact Jennifer Digmann at 989-775-8475 or Paul Kruska at 989-828-5103.



Ministry with the Community & World



Coordinating the Community for Christmas Giving

Christmas Outreach Needs Your Help!

Monetary Donations are Needed:

Please send your checks payable to Christmas Outreach (a 501(c)3) to Immanuel Lutheran Church 320 S. Bradley, Mt. Pleasant MI 48858 or Deposit it at any local branch of Isabella Bank.

Item Donations are Needed:

The following items must be NEW or gently used and clean. They can be dropped off at **Finch Fieldhouse on MONDAY, DECEMBER 4 between 9am-5pm**

Winter Coats, Hats & Mittens, Boots, Christmas Decorations
Stockings, Books, Jeans & Linens

PLEASE NOTE ITEMS WE WILL NOT ACCEPT: Toys, Household Items, General Clothing. Please limit your donations to the items listed above.

Volunteers are Needed:

When: Friday, December 8, 9:00 am—5:00 pm
Saturday, December 10, 9:00 am—3:00pm

Please call (989)317-8733 if you have any questions regarding Christmas Outreach!!

Immanuel Offers Electronic Giving

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. **IMMANUEL NOW ACCEPTS CREDIT CARDS!!**

December Worship Helpers

Cantors

3 Bill Gallaher
10 Amy Powell
17 (10:00) Children's Program
24 (Lessons & Carols
31 Kathy Gallaher

Counters

3 Jodie Mitchell-Beach & Harry Plouff
10 John Emmons & John Warriner
17 Chuck McCollom & Cindy Torgerson
24 Jacque Jackson & John Lorand
31 Jodie Mitchell-Beach & Harry Plouff

Altar Guild

3 Sandy Warriner & Denise Little
10 Billie Plouff & Ann Ferguson
17 Bonnie Schaeffer & Bonnie Berthold
24 Paula Krueger & Judy Emmons
31 Chris Schuster & Deb Reimer

Projector

3 (9:00) Amy Powell
(11:00) Aubron Anderson
10 (9:00) Dan Digmann
(11:00) Dana Mielke
17 (10:00) Gabe Goodrich
24 (10:00) Ted Tuma
(7:30) Deb LaBlance
31 (10:00) Amy Powell

Ushers

3 (9:00) Ruth Magnell, Aaron Smith,
Bill Jensen, Paul Geisthardt
(11:00) Volunteers needed
10 (9:00) Bill Jensen, Carl Graef, Paul
Geisthardt, Ed Berthold
(11:00) Volunteers needed
17 (10:00) Bill Jensen, Carl Graef, Tom Endres
24 (10:00) Carl Graef
(7:30) Carl Graef, Bill Jensen
31 (10:00) Carl Graef, Aaron Smith, Bill Jensen

Assisting Ministers

3 (9:00) Dan Eversole
(11:00) Amy Powell
10 (9:00) Mark Strandskov
(11:00) Natalie Douglas
17 (10:00) Chris Schuster
24 (10:00) Volunteer needed
(7:30) Volunteer needed
31 (10:00) Linda Wicander

