WINTER 2026 - 2027 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

THE IMMANUEL INFORMER

A publication of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church



IN THIS ISSUE

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FALL RECAP WITH PICTURES

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Building strong relationships in Christ and making Him known to all.

lcmc
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

2026/2027 IMMANUEL COUNCIL & BOARD MEMBERS

CHURCH OFFICERS

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Vice President: Rhonda Ostrem
Secretary: Lori Whipple
Treasurer: Chuck Carlson

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Joel Danielson
Frank Baedke
Julie Skaar
Patty Rathmacher

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Lily Rathmacher
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Mary Danielson
Kendra Watson

YOUTH BOARD

Pastor Allison Potratz
Grant Severson
Brandi Hill
Gracey Haberl (Youth Rep)
Joshua Dahl (Youth Rep)

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Sean Edens
Brice Haskin
Steve Skartvedt
Jim Oberender
Ben Haberl



getCONNECTED with IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Amanda Tebben
NURSERY COORDINATOR

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www.immanuelstorycity.org

Church Office Hours:
Mondays - Thursdays: 9 A.M. - Noon
Fridays by appointment only

Sunday Schedule

8:00 A.M. RADIO BROADCAST
(KASI, 1430 A.M.)

8:30 A.M. EDUCATION HOUR

9:30 A.M. WORSHIP
LIVE STREAM

10:30 A.M. FELLOWSHIP (SOCIAL HALL)

Facebook
ImmanuelLutheranStoryCity

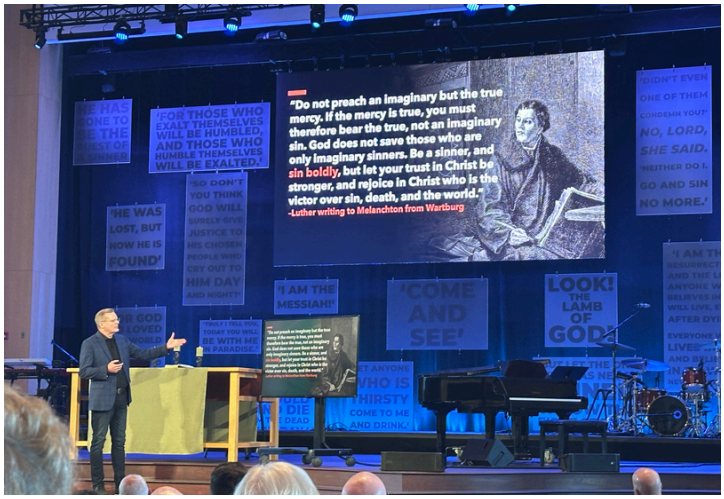
YouTube
Immanuel Lutheran Story City

Apple Podcasts
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Story City, IA



IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Through giving, serving and caring for neighbors in need, we can turn thanksgiving into faithful action. May God open our eyes to opportunities to bless others with willing hearts and open hands.





fall 2026 sermon series

MORE *to* YOUR STORY

based on the book by MAX LUCADO



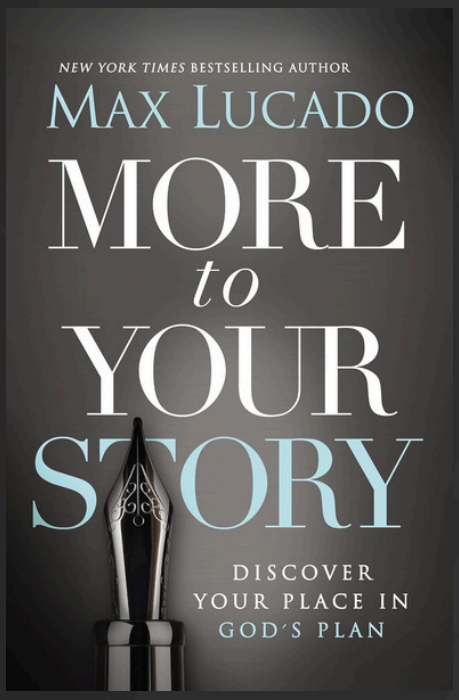
by Pastor Allison Potratz

This fall at Immanuel we have been going through the book "More to Your Story: Discover Your Place in God's Plan" by Max Lucado. The hope was that each week we would pay attention to the story that God is writing in our lives. God promises in Jeremiah 29:11, "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." God gave each one of us the gift of life and has been writing your story since even before you were even born. Today, God is still writing your story, but too often we can miss what God is doing in our lives because we don't take the time to pay attention. The biggest reason we don't pay attention is because we are simply too busy! We have work, family commitments, errands to run, meals to make, and somehow squeeze in some rest and relaxation for ourselves. Sometimes we even have to sit at a football game for one child while livestreaming the concert for the other child just so we can try to be in two places at once (I did that recently!)! Really, who has time to pay attention to the story God is writing for us?

Max Lucado challenges us to think differently. He says, *"We need to know where we came from. Knowing connects us, links us, bonds us to something greater than we are. Knowing reminds us that we aren't floating on isolated ponds but on a grand river. That's why God wants you to know his story."* God has something greater for you in this life. There really is more to your story than managing the family calendar, cooking, sleeping, running from one thing to the next, and then doing it all over again the next day! If we take time to pause, thank God for our life, and ask Him to guide us and be more aware of His presence, we just might find that in our mundane, ordinary lives, that God is doing extraordinary things for you! Perhaps even putting opportunities for you to THRIVE right in your path!

Over the next few weeks we are going to be talking about how to discover your place in God's story RIGHT HERE at Immanuel. Our hope is that you will discover that Immanuel is a place where you belong! This is a place where you can invest in order to help everyone THRIVE! Not only is God writing your story, He is equipping you with special gifts that He wants you to use to edify the church. We don't want the gifts God has given you to be stagnant and pushed aside for when the church really needs you. We want you to be using your spiritual gifts regularly, so that not only do you feel fulfilled, but so does the church community!

In November we will be offering a Gifts Discovery Workshop where you can learn about your specific gifts that God has given you and how you can use those gifts to care for our church. Maybe you didn't know that you had gifts for youth discipleship! Maybe you didn't know that you had the gift of hospitality and would be a good greeter! Or perhaps you have the spiritual gift of faith and didn't realize how fulfilled you would be by offering to pray for others on Sunday mornings! We want to see EVERYONE using their gifts to plug into God's story at Immanuel. Because He is still writing our story as a church family, and YOU are a part of it!



There's more to your story than you think— come explore it with us through our sermons, weekly adult Bible study, and small groups this season.

GET YOUR COPY OF

More to Your Story

Immanuel Snapshot

Sunday In-Person Attendance

- July average: 119
- August average: 119
- September average: 143

3-month average: 127

Online Average Attendance*

Sunday average: 30

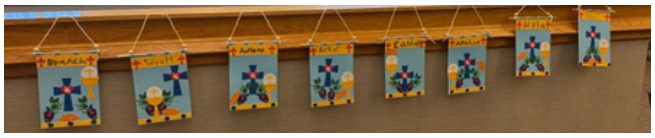
**this accounts for those watching live - not those who view the service after the livestream has ended.*

Deaths & Memorials

- Berniece Voga passed away on August 16. Service was held on September 4.
- Eloise Thorson passed away August 31. Service was held October 17.
- Norma Sexe passed away September 20. Service was held September 24.
- Roger Oakland passed away October 1. Service was held October 8.

Other Pastoral Acts

- Baptism of John Christian, son of Tom & Courtney Christian on July 19. Sponsors: Heather Thompson, Nathan Danzer, Dena Boyd, Sawyer Hjortsvang.
- Baptism of Isla Johnson, daughter of Tanner & Brianna Johnson on September 27. Sponsors: Tayte Johnson, Teagan Johnson, Tessa Johnson and Ashley Johnson.
- The following students celebrated their first communion on Sunday October 4. Hyla Hill, Taylor Vold, Adaline Doise, Elijah and Dakoda Zerr, Anthony Christian, Branch Whipple, Easton Royer, Parker Mullenbach.




- The following students received their 2nd grade Bibles on Rally Sunday: Courtney Larsen, Tessa Leeman, Lyla Palmer, Wyatt Royer, Gwen Tebben, Georgia Voga, and Becca Whipple.



Other Church Happenings

- We offer Sunday School for 3-year-olds through 5th Grade and Confirmation for 6th-8th graders. Sunday mornings at 8:30am.
- On Rally Sunday we had guest magician Curtis Hed perform a show called "Don't Be Fooled." He brought a wonderful message to our Sunday School kids about how Christ has given us His Church to encourage us, His Word (the Bible) to instruct us, and His Holy Spirit to guide us. We even got to meet his magical bird named Duo.







- Kingdom Kids sang on Oct. 11th and the Young Disciples sang on Oct. 18th.





- Kingdom Kids and Young Disciples sing on November 15th. and our 3rd graders will be serving in worship for Student Serve Sunday on Nov. 29th. Thank you to our 4th and 5th graders who served in worship in September and October for our monthly Student Serve Sunday!

- The quilters put together 104 quilts for Lutheran World Relief this past year. Brent and Diane Christian transported them to Fort Dodge to be shipped out. Here are several pictures of ladies tying our quilts on the first Thursday of each month. We meet in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00 am for tying quilts, coffee, treats and fellowship. Everyone is welcome and no experience is necessary. The quilters will also send many quilts to Hope Ministry in Des Moines for distribution during Thanksgiving Holiday. Thank you to Carol Baedke for getting sheets from hotels as a donation for making backs for our quilts. This was a nice addition to our stash for making backs to go with constructed tops. Finally, baby quilts and young children's quilts are given to Myrtle's Closet to share the blessing of comfort to these special young children Myrtle's Closet serves. Immanuel Quilters would like to thank our congregation members for donating cotton fabric, sheets and money towards our Mission of Comfort.









- On Wednesday, October 14, students from central Iowa gathered at the Ballard football stadium for Fields of Faith! This is an annual event that is put on by the Iowa State Fellowship for Christian Athletes, along with local FCA groups. Students gather for a tailgate meal, games on the field, worship, and a time to hear testimonies. Eli Van Hove and Mackenzie Petersen represented Roland-Story High School with a testimony and scripture reading and more than 20 Iowa State athletes from multiple sports shared during the breakout sessions, including Tamin Lipsey and Aiden Flora!













- This October, our pastors, staff and members of the council attended the LCMC National Annual Gathering at Lutheran Church of Hope in Des Moines. This year's theme was "Unleashed" based on Galatians 5. All four keynote speakers explored the freedom Christ gives us—freedom from earning God's favor, proving our worth, and remaining captive to sin and self-focused striving. This was a great few days of worship, fellowship, breakout sessions, and discussion with other LCMC congregations from all of the world!
- Next summer we have 11 people going on a mission trip to Duluth Minnesota! While there, our group may have the opportunity to assist in children's programming at a local youth center, care for the elderly by helping with outdoor yard projects, or sort donations at a food pantry. In the afternoons, we will hear from a local community speaker and enjoy opportunities to explore Enger Tower and the Great Lakes Aquarium. If you would like to financially support those who are going on the mission trip, you can make a designated donation to the youth fund, or talk to our financial secretary Carol Lake or Pastor Allison!
- On Sunday, October 25, we recognized Pastor Appreciation Month by giving Pastors Andrew and Allison, as well as seminarian Grant Severson (and Chris Dahl) a bottle of bacon bits and a gift card to a restaurant. Thank you for giving us spiritual "bits" of wisdom, "hamming" up the sermons, and adding the perfect seasoning of God's love and grace to our lives!



- We installed our newly elected council on Sunday, October 25. Please keep our new leaders in your prayers and consider how you can help our congregation thrive in 2027!



Church Financial Report

To see the church's current financial report, check the lobby slatwall for paper copies. Questions regarding the church's financial status can be directed to financial secretary, Carol Lake, or church treasurer, Chuck Carlson.

Church Council & Board Minutes

Contact Church Council Secretary Lori Whipple for all council and board minutes.

Minutes of the Joint Council Meeting: Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church
August 20, 2026 7:45 PM In Person in the Social Hall

Present: Pastor Allison, Pastor Andrew, Doug Mechaelsen, Lori Whipple, Chuck Carlson, Patty Rathmacher, Frank Baedke, Lily Rathmacher, Sean Edens, Brad Waline, John Nordeen, Julie Skaar, Kelly Dahl, Jim Oberender, Grant Severson (guest), Steve Skartvedt, Brice Haskins, Ben Haberl

President Doug Mechaelsen called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

1. Opening devotions and prayer was given by Allison.
2. Approval of previous meeting minutes. Sean moved that the June minutes be approved and Brice offered a second. Approved unanimously.
3. Treasurer's Report for June and July were presented by Chuck Carlson using documents emailed to council. Steve moved that the Treasurer's report be approved and Ben offered a second. Approved unanimously.
4. Report of Boards (see below for full reports)
    a. Board of Ed: Pastor Allison
    b. Deacons: Kelly Dahl
    c. Trustees: Ben Haberl
    d. Youth Board: Pastor Allison
5. Old Business
    a. Safety Conversations Update. Doug and Andrew came up with fifteen potential members to serve on the Safety Team. Four have responded in the affirmative and awaiting word from the others. Doug will reach out next week again. It is believed that there would be at least three individuals weekly. One that could handle medical, one lower-level threat and one to handle major threats which would be current or prior law enforcement. Once the team is established the draft of the safety policy will be finalized and approved.
6. New Business
    a. Employee Handbook. There was an employee handbook established back in 2017 of which the council was given a copy. Doug would like the current council to review and then be reviewed again with the new council. Brad mentioned that he also knew there was a social media policy and he said he would locate and send to Doug. Doug will give the entire council the email address of the president.

b. Approve Financial Secretary. Diane Christian applied for the position. She will start during this fiscal year. Her salary was included in this year's budget. Brice moved that Diane Christian be offered the Financial Secretary position and John offered a second. Approved unanimously.

c. Nominating Committee Update. Pastor Andrew informed the council that we are still looking for one Deacon and one member of the Board of Education.

d. Andrew Proposal. Andrew presented his proposal to consider a position with Master's Institute on a part time basis. He encouraged questions or comments but nothing will be considered during this current year.

e. Set Annual Meeting Date/Council Installation. The Constitution says that annual meeting can be held on the third or fourth Sunday in October. It was proposed that the annual meeting be held on October 18 and installation of officers on October 25. Sean moved and Steve offered a second to hold the annual meeting on October 18th and installation of officers on October 25th. Approved unanimously.

Doug adjourned the meeting at 8:39 PM. Those present ended the meeting praying the Lord's Prayer. Steve moved that the meeting be adjourned and Ben offered a second. Next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2026. Devotions will be given by a Pastor Allison.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Whipple, Secretary

Minutes of the Joint Council Meeting: Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church
September 17, 2026 7:45 PM In Person in the Social Hall

Present: Pastor Allison, Pastor Andrew, Doug Mechaelsen, Lori Whipple, Chuck Carlson, Patty Rathmacher, Frank Baedke, Sean Edens, John Nordeen, Julie Skaar, Kelly Dahl, Steve Skartvedt, Brice Haskin, Ben Haberl, Brandi Hill, Jena Larsen

President Doug Mechaelsen called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

1. Opening devotions and prayer was given by Pastor Andrew.
2. Approval of previous meeting minutes. Sean moved that the August minutes be approved and Ben offered a second. Approved unanimously.
3. Treasurer's Report for August was presented by Chuck Carlson using documents emailed to council. Chuck will speak to the congregation on September 20 regarding the current financial situation. Steve moved that the Treasurer's report be approved and Ben offered a second. Approved unanimously.
4. Report of Boards (see below for full reports)
    a. Deacons: Kelly Dahl
    b. Trustees: Ben Haberl
    c. Board of Ed: Pastor Allison
    d. Youth Board: Pastor Allison stated that EPIC has started with 35-40 middle schoolers and 10-12 high schoolers. Final sign up for the summer mission trip is this week. There are seven so far with a few more considering.

5. Old Business
    a. Safety Team Update. Ten responded affirmative to being a member of the Safety Team and one said no. Still waiting for the remaining four. For those who responded yes, they will meet next Thursday.
    b. Nominating Committee Update. Andrew reported that we still need one Board of Ed member and one Deacon. The nominating committee still needs one member as well.
6. New Business
    a. 2026-2027 Budget Process. Carol Lake and Chuck will meet to go over the actual expenses and put together a budget for 2026-2027. This will be presented to the Executive Committee to approve and bring to the October meeting.
    b. 2027 Staff Raises. The Executive Committee will meet prior to the October council meeting and bring their proposal for raises to that meeting.
    c. New Members. The Deacons voted that Paul and Janelle Swenson be considered for membership. Steve moved that Paul and Janelle be offered membership and John offered a second. Approved unanimously.

Doug adjourned the meeting at 8:50 PM. Pastor Andrew closed in prayer and those present ended the meeting praying the Lord's Prayer. Julie moved that the meeting be adjourned and Brandi offered a second. Next meeting is scheduled for October 8, 2026. Devotions will be given by the Officers.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Whipple, Secretary



Grace for the Year Ahead

As this year draws to a close, we remember its joys, its challenges, and the prayers still waiting for answers. Through every season, God has been faithful.

We place our regrets in His mercy, our sorrows in His care, and our hopes in His hands. We do not need to know all that tomorrow holds to take the next step in faith.

May the coming year find us loving more freely, forgiving more readily, and sharing kindness wherever we go. With grateful hearts, we welcome a new beginning, trusting that God will walk beside us each day.

what can I pray about?

- We pray that God would empower Immanuel, its members, its ministry, and its leadership to be steadfast in faith, hope, and love.
- We pray for God to move in the hearts of Immanuel's people to invest in Immanuel's needs through generosity of resources and time.
- We pray for God's hand to move in our community, and to lead people to hear, receive, and know the Good News through Immanuel and other local churches. We pray that God would work in and through US to answer this prayer!
- We pray for God to lead us into a season of discovering our gifts, and using them for the betterment of the Kingdom of God!
- We pray for God to show us how to engage with our gifts and passions for the sake of His Kingdom.
- We pray for the war-torn and unstable areas of our world, and ask for God's Peace to prevail in these places and in our lives - specifically Iran, Haiti, and Ukraine.
- We pray for God to give Immanuel's staff and council a clear Vision, Direction, and Mission to fulfill through our work here.
- If you have prayer requests that you would like to share, please reach out to one of our pastors or Milianna in our office.

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my prayers

my praises

Church Library



"This is the day the Lord has made;
Let us rejoice and be glad in it."
Psalm 118:24

The time of year has arrived when we find special days and holiday events scattered across the calendar pages. Perhaps Ralph Waldo Emerson had the above Bible verse in mind when he wrote "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year." Stop in the library and let us help you celebrate all your special days with uplifting, life-affirming reading material. Our most recent additions include:

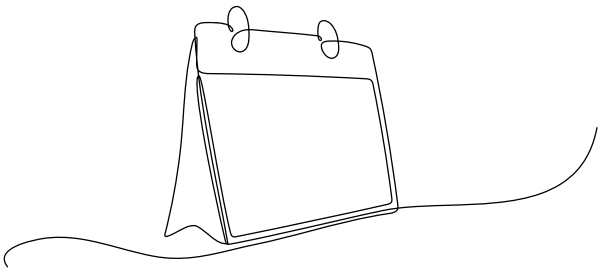
A Choice Considered and **A Truth Revealed** from Tracie Peterson's "Heart of Cheyenne" series. Follow the stories of two young women as they negotiate the transition from being a daughter in need of care to being independent individuals able to think and act on their own behalf.

In **Break of Day**, **Dark of Night**, and **Edge of Dusk**, a romantic suspense series by Coleen Coble, we find Law Enforcement Officer Annie Pederson working hard to solve a string of missing person cases that has plagued the town of Rock Harbor, Michigan recently. At the same time she is fully committed to raising her young daughter and developing a relationship with a special man from her past - the one that got away. Be sure to read the series in order to fully enjoy it.

A Model of Devotion by Mary Connealy has the theme of achieving success through determination and perseverance, no matter what barriers are put before you. A young woman with a gifted mind for math faces roadblocks, disasters, and even the threat of death to design and build a railroad bridge for her family's lumber business.

My Beloved by Jan Karon. Father Tim and the cast of characters from Midford are back as endearing as ever as they prepare for the upcoming holiday season.

The First Christmas by Stephen Mitchell. Give yourself a blessed gift this Christmas by taking time to read this book. You will find yourself thinking, "Yes, I always wondered about that!" It is a true treasure.



Scan the QR code for our church calendar!

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

These are the weekly gatherings and activities that form the rhythm of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Sundays

8am	Radio Broadcast
8:30am	Education Hour
9:30am	Worship
10:30am	Fellowship

Mondays

8:30am	Women's Bible Study

Tuesdays

9:30am	Staff Meeting

Wednesdays

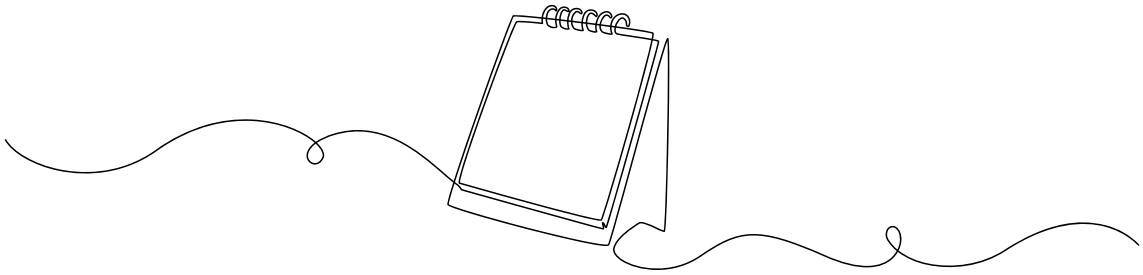
5:45-7:15pm	Middle School EPIC
7:30-9pm	High School EPIC

Saturdays

8:00am	Men of Immanuel

Church activities are subject to change. See the current Google Calendar on our church website: immanuelstorycity.org

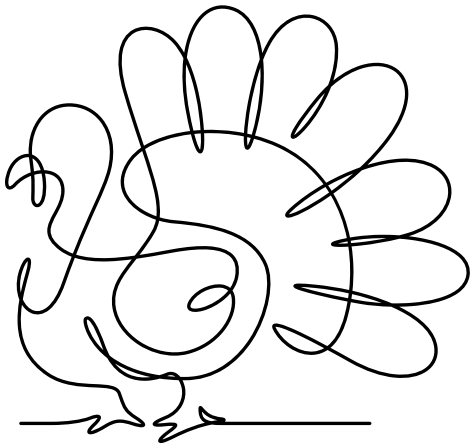
Have something to share with the Immanuel church community?



All bulletin, worship and/or weekly email announcements are due to the church office by 10 A.M. on Thursday mornings for inclusion in our church communications. *Contact Milianna in the church office with questions.*

november

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					



CALENDAR

1	Communion Sunday//Daylight Saving Time ends	
3	Election Day	
5	Quilters	9am//Social Hall
8	Choir Rehearsal	10:45am
10	Social Hall Reserved	6-9pm
11	Lunch and Learn RSVP deadline	
12	Deacons//Trustees//Board of Ed Meetings Church Council Meeting	6:30pm 7:45pm
14	LCMC Iowa District Annual Gathering	8:30am - 2pm
15	Kingdom Kids and Young Disciples Sing Service of Holy Communion Spiritual Gifts Lunch and Learn	9:30am 10:30am 11:30am
16	Social Hall Reserved	6-9pm
22	Christmas Poinsettias Orders Due Thanksgiving Ecumenical Worship Service	-- 7pm
25	No EPIC (Thanksgiving Break	
26/27	Thanksgiving Day - Church Closed	
29	First Sunday of Advent Student Serve Sunday (3rd graders) Immanuel Choir Sings	 9:30am

NOVEMBER EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Women's Bible Study

Ladies (of all ages!) meet on Monday mornings at 8:30am in the Cornerstone room. Soon we will be wrapping up our Lisa Harper study on *The Song of Songs*. The next two studies we will be discussing are called *"Closer: Spiritual Practices to Deepen Your Intimacy with Jesus"* and *"Gather: Spiritual Practices to Deepen Your Relationships with Others."* Both of these studies are by Lisa Harper and Christine Caine.





5 Quilters — 9am - noon //Social Hall

No quilting experience needed. Bring a snack to share for coffee time! Donations of bed sheets and pillowcases (80 - 100% cotton), fabric, and financial gifts are always needed. Contact Julie Thompson for more information.

8 Choir Rehearsal — 10:45am

All singers from 6th grade and up are welcome! We're preparing our anthem for November 29. We will sing through the Thanksgiving Service (Nov. 22) anthem that will be sung by combined church choirs, too. See you in the choir pews!

14 LCMC Iowa District Annual Gathering



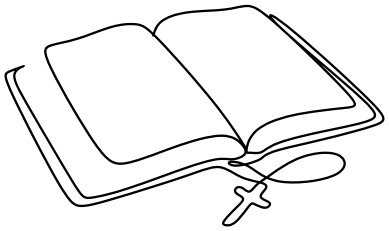
15 Spiritual Gifts Discovery Lunch & Learn 11:30am//Social Hall



On Sunday, November 15, 2026, Join the pastors for a Lunch and Learn! Has it been a while since you looked at your personality and spiritual gifts? Or would this be a new thing for you? We invite you to come learn more about how God has wired you, gifted you, and prepared you to engage in a Thriving Life of growth and transformation. We'll ask that you sign up in advance, and that you do a couple of short online assessments prior to coming on the 15th. These links will be provided upon registration. *Please RSVP to the church office by Wednesday, November 11th so that we can plan for food and get materials out in advance!*

Adult Sunday School

Our Adult Sunday school continues each week at 8:30am on Sunday mornings. Each week we dig into some of the texts and themes for that Sunday's sermon. Each week is a new text, so come when you can and dig deeper into God's Word with us!



"Thou hast given so much to me. Give me one thing more – a grateful heart." George Herbert

22 Christmas Poinsettia Orders Due

We have ordered a limited number of red, pink, and white poinsettias from Goode Greenhouses to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. These poinsettias are in a 4.5" pot and include 3 to 5 blooms. If you would like to sponsor a poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one, please fill out the bulletin insert and include payment. Return to the church office or scan the QR code and fill out the online form by Sunday, November 22.

Each plant is $10 to sponsor. We will list your name and the names of those you are sponsoring in the bulletin insert on Christmas Eve. You may remain anonymous if you wish.

You can choose from the assorted plants in our display in the sanctuary after Christmas Eve worship (Thursday, December 24).

22 Thanksgiving Service 7pm

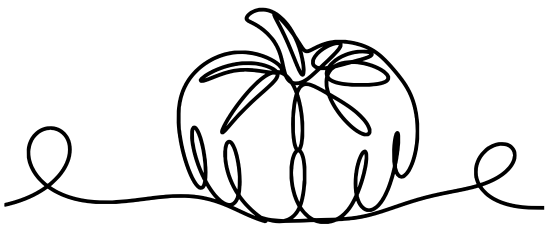




If you are willing to provide a pie for the service, pick up a pie card in the lobby or contact Julie Skaar. Uncut pies are due to the Social Hall by 2pm on November 22.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Kathy Thompson	**11**	Ruby Olson	**25**	Shelli Hassebrock
3	Linda Cooper Jenessa Haskin Steve Olson Kendall Wakefield	**12**	Wendy Whitaker Lydia Witthuhn	**27**	Hallie Shill
4	Cassie Edwards	**13**	Matt Sporleder	**28**	Kim Sporleder Marilyn Whipple
5	Mike Mullenbach Don Olson	**16**	Sue Braland Paula Voga		
6	Tyler Whipple	**19**	Cindy Blomberg Terry Greenfield Lee Rickerl		
7	Theresa Haskin	**22**	John Johnson		
8	Wyatt Royer	**24**	Linda Graber Jaden Reinert Dennis Soderstrum		
10	Patricia Matheason				



Let the church office know if we're missing your birthday or anniversary so we can celebrate with you!



NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

7	Brandon & Laurel Leeman	**24**	Chris & Nicole Engelhardt Steve & Miriam Skartvedt
10	Jim & Kathy Hovick	**28**	Terry & Jerry Greenfield
23	Ben & Rachel Winecoff		

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new.
Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself to me in his gifts?
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Advent

Come and See!

This Advent we'll prepare ourselves for Christmas with an invitation:

Come and See!

God's story is worth taking a look at again and again.

We also believe that God is doing good things here at Immanuel, and we want this season to be an encouragement to all members to ***INVITE*** others to come and see too!

God's story is for all to hear – and God has a place and purpose for many more people here at Immanuel too!





SUNDAY
NOVEMBER
29

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Come & See *Hope*

Student Serve Sunday; Immanuel Choir sings special music.

Fellowship: Flavors of Fall with Tabletop Nativity Displays

As fall moves into the season of Advent, enjoy treats in your favorite fall flavors and view the tabletop nativity displays in the social hall.



SUNDAY
DECEMBER
6

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Come & See *Peace*

Service of Holy Communion during worship.

Fellowship: Scandinavian

We're decking the halls Scandinavian-style! Kringla, rice pudding, potato cakes, spritz and other Scandinavian goodies. Hot chocolate and lots of coffee too!



SUNDAY
DECEMBER
13

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Come & See *Joy*

Kingdom Kids and Young Disciples Christmas programs.

Fellowship: A Birthday Party for Baby Jesus

Celebrate the birthday of a king with birthday cake, decorations and fun activities. Whether you are 1 or 100, everyone enjoys a birthday party!



SUNDAY
DECEMBER
20

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Come & See *Love*

(No Sunday School)

Fellowship: Belgian Waffles

As Christmas draws near, enjoy the peace of the season. Come enjoy waffles, fruit, little smokies, coffee, apple cider and hot chocolate.



THURSDAY
DECEMBER
24

CHRISTMAS EVE

Come & See *Christ*

Worship Services at 4:30 and 7:00 PM

Each service features readings, congregational hymns, special music, service of Holy Communion & candlelight singing of *Silent Night*.



SUNDAY
DECEMBER
27

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Christmas Hymn Sing

Bring a plate of your leftover holiday goodies to share after worship!



IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

604 Lafayette Ave, Story City, Iowa
immanuelstorycity.org

Sign Up to Help with Advent Fellowship!

december

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



CALENDAR

3	Quilters	9am//Social Hall
4	Sanctuary and Social Hall Reserved	12-8pm
6	Second Sunday of Advent Communion Sunday	
8	Social Hall Reserved	6-9pm
10	Social Hall Reserved Deacons//Trustees//Board of Ed Meetings Church Council Meeting	10am-12pm 6:30pm 7:45pm
11	Social Hall Reserved	8am-2pm
13	Third Sunday of Advent Sunday School Christmas Programs Church Musical Auditions	 9:30am 1-2pm
16	EPIC Caroling & Christmas Party *(last EPIC for 2026)*	5:45pm
20	Fourth Sunday of Advent *No Sunday School* Service of Holy Communion	 10:30am
24	Christmas Eve Worship	4:30 & 7pm
25	Christmas Day - Office Closed	
27	First Sunday after Christmas - Hymn Sing	9:30am
28-31	No Church Activities	
31	New Year's Eve//Financial Gifts due by noon	

DECEMBER EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

Small Groups

Small groups are an important part of Immanuel's community. Sunday mornings alone do not give us the time and space to "Grow deep relationships in Christ" as our Mission Statement calls us to do, so many of Immanuel's people find that in the small group setting.

Do you want to start a small group? We can train you! Contact Pastor Andrew for more information.
Do you want to join a group? We can help you find one! Let the pastors or the office know and we'll get you plugged into a group.
Do you need ideas or resources for your current group? We keep a great library of small group video materials at the church. Contact Pastor Andrew!

13 Sunday School Christmas Programs 9:30am

Our Kingdom Kids (3/4 year olds through 1st graders) and Young Disciples (2nd through 5th graders) will present their Christmas programs during worship on December 13. Stay after worship for a birthday party for Jesus!

13 Musical Auditions 1-2pm

We invite all kids 2nd grade and up to audition for our upcoming spring church musical, ***"In the Big Inning"***! Performances will be April 3rd and 4th.



Summary: When the kids gather at the park near the church for a Saturday of baseball, they are in for a surprising glimpse at the Bible's "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11. They'll meet Moses, Noah, Abraham, and many more. With shades of the iconic "Casey at the Bat," it all leads to the climactic finish of "Jesus at the Cross," and the Good News of the Gospel is driven home with power!

There are big and small roles, as well as non-speaking roles in this production. Pick up an audition packet in the lobby starting November 29. You will audition with a short song (provided) and read a few lines. We'll announce the cast at 2pm. *Rehearsals are Sundays 12:30-2pm and Wednesdays 2-3:30pm starting January 6th.*

A Gift of Time - Serve this Christmas!



Some of the most meaningful gifts cannot be wrapped. Offering a helping hand, listening to someone's story or spending time with a neighbor can make a lasting difference. Prayerfully consider where you might share your time and talents this December.

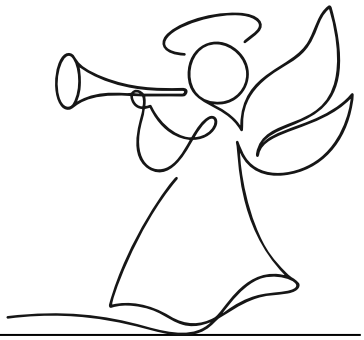
24 Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship 4:30 & 7pm



Set aside the bustle of the season and join us for Christmas Eve worship. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we welcome longtime members, visiting family and those joining us for the first time. There is a place for you here - *Come and See Christ!*

Through Scripture, Holy Communion, song and prayer, may the wonder of His birth renew our hope and fill our hearts with peace to share with others.

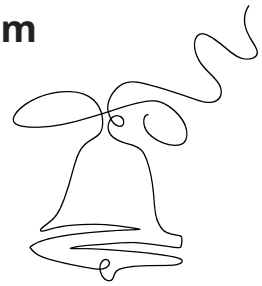
25 Christmas Day!



You gave us the greatest gift possible in the person of Christ, O Lord. Help each of us to personally relate to the Savior and thus enjoy all the benefits of his presence. In his name. Amen.

Merry Christmas, Immanuel Lutheran Church!

27 Christmas Hymn Sing 9:30am



We're opening the hymnal and singing the Christmas carols! Join us for this musical service and join in the joy of sharing the Good News of Christmas!

Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

Holiday Office Hours: Planning Ahead With Care



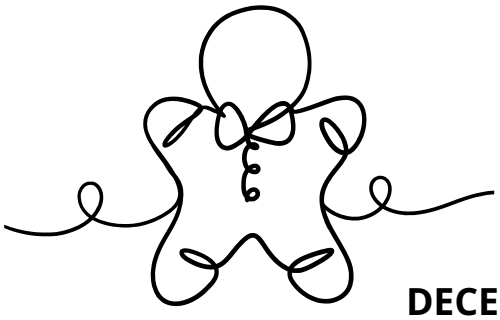
Please observe our special office hours as Christmas and New Year's approach:

December 24: normal hours (9am - 12pm)
December 25 & January 1: Closed
December 28 - 31: 9am - 3pm

Planning ahead with your end-of-the-year giving is appreciated. We are grateful for our church staff and wish them a joyful time of rest and celebration.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Carol Altena	**9**	May Loots	**19**	Gayle Tate Jason Thompson
2	Melissa Chick	**10**	Larry Fuhrman	**21**	Ashlee Mullenbach Braden Richardson Solvay Twedt Sue Twedt
3	Grayson Nordeen Paityn Reifschneider	**12**	Mike Billings Dale Edwards Janet Stock Kyla Wright	**23**	Brooke Lyn Mader
5	Nadine Beck Fran Christian	**13**	Diane Christian Tim Marienau Leah Oppedal	**27**	Chuck Anderson Nicole Engelhardt John Nordeen
6	Hunter Hill Paul Voga	**14**	Steve Skartvedt	**28**	Jace Mensen
7	LaVerne Pierce Laurie Thompson	**16**	Duane Hassebrock	**30**	Brent Johnson
8	Chuck Carlson Tessa Leeman Sierra Witthuhn	**17**	Janet Oppedal		



Let the church office know if we're missing your birthday or anniversary so we can celebrate with you!



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

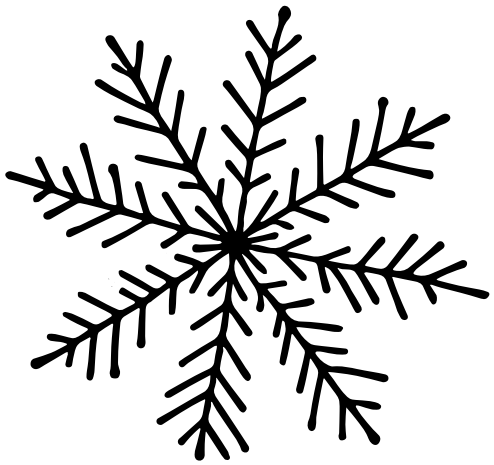
22	Al & Karen Hermanson	**30**	Treyton & Sierra Witthuhn

I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year.

—Charles Dickens

january

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



CALENDAR

1	New Year's Day - Office Closed	
3	Communion Sunday *No Sunday School*	
6	EPIC resumes Musical Rehearsal	 2-3:30pm
7	Quilters	9am//Social Hall
10	Sunday School Resumes Musical Rehearsal	8:30am 12:30-2pm
12	Social Hall Reserved	6-9pm
13	Musical Rehearsal	2-3:30pm
14	Deacons//Trustees//Board of Ed Meetings Church Council Meeting	6:30pm 7:45pm
15	Quarterly Newsletter Submission Deadline	
17	Service of Holy Communion Musical Rehearsal	10:30am 12:30-2pm
20	Musical Rehearsal	2-3:30pm
24	Musical Rehearsal	12:30-2pm
27	Musical Rehearsal	2-3:30pm
31	Family Sunday School Kingdom Kids and Young Disciples Sing	8:30am 9:30am

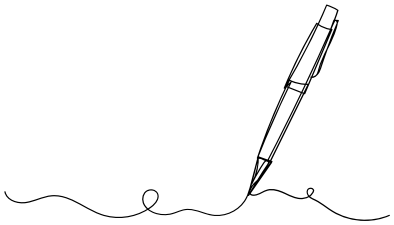
JANUARY EVENT SPOTLIGHTS

1 New Year's Day

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning." — Lamentations 3:22–23

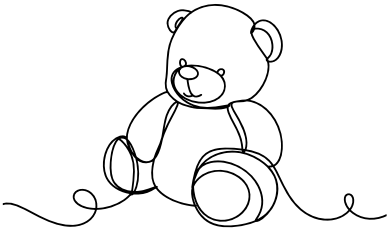
As we step into 2027, we celebrate a fresh start and a faithful God. May this new year be filled with His hope, peace, and purpose.

15 Winter Newsletter Submission Deadline



Any articles, pictures, or other newsletter submissions for our SPRING Quarterly Newsletter *(FEBRUARY - MARCH - APRIL)* are due to the church office by January 15th.

Church Nursery on Sundays 8:30am - 10:30am



We are blessed to have a staffed nursery almost every Sunday! The nursery is available for all children aged 4 and under, located across from the bathrooms, next to the pastors' offices. When the nursery is staffed, parents are asked to sign in when they bring their children to the nursery, and then then sign out when they return to pick them up.

Men of Immanuel Saturdays @ 8am



Men of all ages are invited for Bible Study, coffee, donuts and fellowship each Saturday morning in the Social Hall. This group typically meets after Labor Day (September) through the last Saturday before Memorial Day (May). Contact Brad Waline with questions.

Holy Communion on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of the Month



We celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month during worship, and again on the third Sunday in a more intimate gathering around the altar. If you're watching online, simply gather bread, crackers, wine, juice, or whatever you have available.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1	Laurel Leeman Braylen Loots	**14**	Parker Watson	**27**	Mary Ness
5	Ken Frette	**15**	Marjorie Michaelson	**29**	Jerry Greenfield
7	Cooper Leeman Michael Mader	**18**	Robert Johnson Dean Kohlmeyer	**30**	Becca Whipple Arlene Willis
9	Patricia Kray Jakoby Tarnow	**20**	Nate Watson		
10	Lisa Elm	**23**	Andrew Potratz		
11	Ben Martindale	**24**	Steve McMenamin		
13	Lois Stevenson	**26**	Kayla Haberl Rhonda Ostrem		

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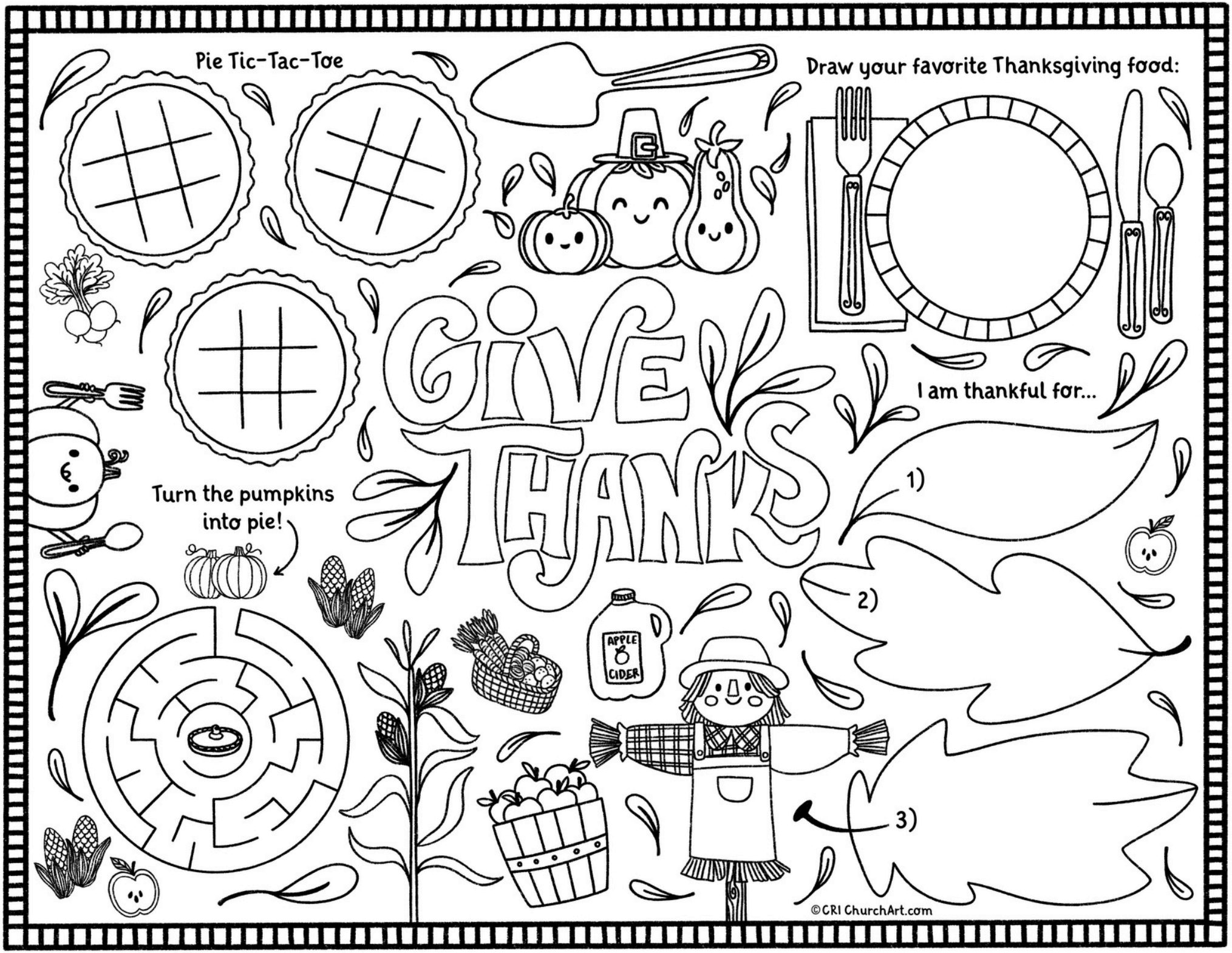
JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

10	Ken & Sue Frette	Edward & Rita Frette



Faith in Action

A Christian is someone who makes it easier for others to believe in God — not through perfection, but through kindness, grace and love in everyday life. When people see Christ's compassion in us, they're drawn closer to Him.


Pie Tic-Tac-Toe
Draw your favorite Thanksgiving food:
GIVE THANKS
I am thankful for...
1)
2)
3)
Turn the pumpkins into pie!
APPLE CIDER
©CRI ChurchArt.com

12 Christmas PRAYERS

1.Expectation

Fill us with hope, knowing that God kept his promise to send his Son to earth. *(See Isaiah 9:6-7.)*

2.Wonder

Just as the angel's message left Mary in awe, remind us of the joyful news of Jesus' coming. *(See Luke 1:31-33.)*

3.Humility

Like Joseph, make us willing to trust God and humbly care for others. *(See Matthew 1:20-21.)*

4.Obedience

On our earthly journey, teach us to follow your commands, just as Joseph and Mary obediently traveled to Bethlehem.*(See Luke 2:4-5.)*

5.Provision

Thank you for meeting all our needs, as you provided a stable and manger bed for Baby Jesus. *(See Luke 2:6-7.)*

6.Peace

Fill us with your perfect peace, which the angels proclaimed when Jesus was born. *(See Luke 2:13-14.)*

7.Praising

Remind us to follow the shepherds' example of celebrating and sharing the good news of Jesus' birth. *(See Luke 2:16-18.)*

8.Grateful

Keep us thankful for God's greatest gift, which Mary treasured on the first Christmas. *(See Luke 2:19.)*

9.Saved

May Jesus' precious name remind us of his power to save us from our sins. *(See Matthew 1:21.)*

10.Fulfilled

Give us content hearts, just as Simeon and Anna found fulfillment in the promised Savior.*(See Luke 2:28-32.)*

11.Worshipful

Like the gift-giving Magi, equip us to give Jesus our very best. *(See Matthew 2:10-11.)*

12.Wisdom

Help us seek your guidance as we follow and grow with Jesus. *(See Luke 2:49-52.)*



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Christmas Riddles

Read the riddles below. Do you know the answers?

1) In a stable I was filled with hay
And became a bed where a baby lay.

What am I?

Luke 2:7

2) Our voices loud were heard on high!
The shepherds were frightened when we filled the sky!

Who are we?

Luke 2:9-13

3) I was shining in the Bethlehem sky that night.
The Magi followed my light so bright!

What am I?

Matthew 2:2

4) We watched our sheep in the night so still;
Then angels praised God and woke up our hill!

Who are we?

Luke 2:8

5) I was at Mary's side for the special birth
And raised the child as his "father on Earth."

Who am I?

Luke 2:16

6) "My heart in song to God I lift"
Said the young mother of God's special gift.

Who am I?

Luke 1:46-55

7) A baby boy, the Promised One!
A gift from God, His beloved Son!

Who am I?

Matthew 1:18

8) The city of David, the little town,
Where the Baby was born and the star shone down.

What am I?

Luke 2:4

9) From the East we traveled far.
We found the child by the light of the star.

Who are we?

Matthew 2:1

Answers: manger, angels, star, shepherds, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Bethlehem, wise men

neighborhood news

HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE? CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE!

Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

204 West Broad St. (mailing address PO Box 23), Story City, IA 50248
loavesnfishessc@gmail.com
All area churches take turns serving the pantry on Saturdays, If you would like to know more about donating or helping Immanuel serve, contact Brad & Karen Waline or the church office.

Most needed items (as of summer 2026):

- toilet paper, kleenex and paper towels
- women's deodorant
- shampoo and conditioner
- ketchup and mustard
- cereal
- diapers (sizes 5 &6)



Norsemen Food Pantry

located at the RS Middle School
Open Every Sunday from 4 - 5 P.M.
Call (515) 388-4348 to donate or with questions

Little Free Pantry

located at 510 Pennsylvania in Story City & open 24/7!
Take food or give food (non-perishable).



Included in the meal:
Turkey, stuffing, creamed corn, mashed potatoes, pie

Call the Middle School (515-388-4348) by 4:00 P.M. November 17 to reserve

LIVING IN COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY LUNCH

ALL ARE WELCOME !

WHEN & WHERE

Saturday, November 14
11:00 AM to 12:30 PM or until food runs out

Bertha Bartlett Public Library
Story City

DELICIOUS MENU

- **Shredded Chicken Sandwiches**
- **Assorted Sides**
- **Homemade Desserts**

Dine-In or Carryout Available

EVERYONE IS WELCOME • FREE MEAL FOR THE COMMUNITY

Hosted by St. Petri Lutheran Church







IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH

604 LAFAYETTE AVE
STORY CITY, IOWA 50248

BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS IN CHRIST



AND MAKING HIM KNOWN TO ALL.

CALL: 1-515-733-4972
TEXT: 1-515-357-6982
OFFICE@IMMANUELSTORYCITY.ORG
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