



# The Image



"The MISSION of Immanuel is to glorify God, build the Christian Church, foster Christian fellowship and concern, and join in the worldwide work of winning souls for Christ."

## From the Pastor's Desk – December 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

*"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:4-5).*

Many of you, by the time this drops, will already have your homes and yards adorned for Christmas. Me too. I love the preparation for Christmas and all that goes with it. I love the busyness, the parties (small "p" parties—not those ragers you have at work), the caroling, all the extra church services that invite us into the ancient mystery, and the decorations. Decorations are such an interesting thing. The choice of how we adorn our hearths is rather subjective, yet that subjectivity tells us something about the hand that hung those ornaments.

Over the years, I've encountered people whose homes and yards are perpetually adorned with a plastic wasteland of Walmart, made-in-China baubles. Valentine's Day and that chubby pagan cherub; the Christ-less Easter pastel pastiche of bunnies, baby-chicks, and eggs; the Fourth; and the increasingly grotesque displays at Halloween. And then we arrive at Christmas. We boomers set the standard for indulgence in Christmas kitsch—the self-centered use (or misuse) of our disposable income.<sup>1</sup>

With our money and time, we seem to gravitate toward warm childhood memories. Of course, there arises a question: are our memories warm because of our actual history, or are they warm because we have been conditioned to have a warm and emotional response to certain stimuli?<sup>2</sup> I think the latter is a bit closer to the truth—memories being such selective and malleable things. For proof of my conclusion, I offer the following: notice what decorates the lawns of many of our neighbors. What you will observe on lawns (and for sale in the big-box stores) are characters from childhood. You will notice characters from *Rudolph*, *Santa Claus is Comin' to Town*, *Frosty the Snowman*, and the seemingly omnipresent Disney cavalcade of characters. Also, pay attention to those "Christmas-y" commercials. You may notice advertisers selling feelings, while the

<sup>1</sup> A good examination of the American search for Christmas in gaudiness may be found in Hank Stuever's analysis of Christmas in Frisco, Texas: *Tinsel: A Search for America's Christmas Present* (New York, Mariner Books, 2009).

<sup>2</sup> An excellent book that explores the topics of consumerism and religion, and commodification (this simply means assigning value where no value exists) is *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture*, by Vincent J. Miller (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2003, reprinted 2013).

product is secondary.<sup>3</sup> You will also observe what's missing from said lawns and commercials. What's missing is Christ. Kitsch trumps Christ.

Why does our culture spend so much on these plastic idols? I think people are searching. They are looking for a glimmer of light in the darkness. They are looking to shove the darkness of life out of their minds, and they think the answer is found in memories and feelings. As noted, I think our memories and feelings are quite easily manipulated. So, we are directed to commercialism and consumption as a source of light. But that light is fake, plastic, cold, and lifeless. And that light fades. Christmas passes; then what? Our culture has no lasting answer, so it places before us—sells to us—other attempts to dispel the darkness. Hence, the endless parade of holiday kitsch. Yet that light remains impotent to lighten our darkness; life and death always worm their way in. It's a well-documented fact that Americans suffer from a great deal of unhappiness and increasing post-Christmas depression. The light so many choose is powerless to cast out the darkness. How sad it is that during one of the holiest times of the year so many poor souls are filled with such sorrow.

It is—or should be—different for us. Our focus during this holy season is directed solely upon the Christ. We sing ancient hymns (and I mean ancient, with many written during the early days of the Christian Church.) We sing of and reflect on God's promises and His steadfast love. We hear of, sing of, and adorn our homes with the light of Christ. And lights, few or many, that we hang on our trees, large or small, will be temporary reminders of the true Light. January will come bringing its bitter cold and long nights. Lights and trees and decorations will be boxed and placed in closets and attics. Parties and the like will be over (although we will, unlike the culture, sing Christmas hymns well into January when we celebrate the end of Christmastide on the Epiphany). And we will face the long, quiet days of winter. Yet, unlike the world around us, we will still celebrate. Long after Christmas, we will still have the Light. And it is a Light that winter cannot extinguish. It is a Light the darkness of sin and the blackness of a buried coffin are powerless to dim.

We have a Light. We celebrate a Light that cannot be dimmed—cannot be overcome, as the Word of God teaches us. Christmas is a celebration that indeed God came to us and walked among us, lived and died for us. The manger is only the beginning of our story as Christians. And even as the Christmas season ends, our story in Christ does not. Christmas leads to the cross. The cross leads to life. Christ came to restore us to a life with Him that does not end. Among us, Christmas and Easter have no end. So, our celebration continues long after the trees have dropped their needles. Our celebration has no end. The Light has no end.

This season is a wonderful time to invite those around us to come and walk in that Light as we do. It is a time to show those who are living in the darkness and reaching for so many false lights just where the true, undimming Light is found, and to begin with us an unending celebration.

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).*

The Lord bless each of you with a wonderful Advent and very merry Christmas.

In Christ's most holy name,

Rev. L.A. Astrowski Jr., Pastor

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<sup>3</sup> This point is not lost on the modern American church. It is my observation (and others) that many, perhaps most, look to sell an emotional experience. The truth is secondary. In fact, an emotional response is understood by many to be more authentic than the truth itself. This is why many churches use words like “authentic” and “relational” to describe themselves. But rest assured, dear reader, your salvation is not contingent in the least on what you feel, but on what God has done in Christ.

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES & BAPTISMS

*We ask God for His blessing upon all our members, especially those who celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and baptisms this month*

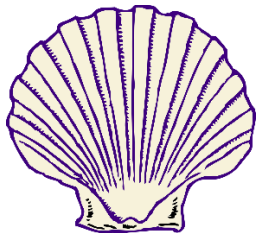


- |                                   |                                    |   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 2 - Wayne Haake                   | 6 - Nancy Farrar<br>Dave Schumaker | 18 - Thomas Ahlgrim<br>Nancy Williamson |
| 3 - Emma Ayers                    | 9 - Pam Shrake                     | 20 - Betty Sulouff                      |
| 5 - Jacob Umlandt<br>Cathy Wiebel | 10 - Amanda Eckardt                | 23 - Carrie Werke                       |
|                                   | 11 - Noah Muske<br>Bryan Saunders  | 24 - Joshua Duburg<br>John Hazen        |
|                                   | 14 - Libby Cortez                  | 27 - Alayna Severtsgaard                |
|                                   | 15 - Ken Anders                    | 30 - Mary Hazen                         |
|                                   | 17 - Nan Hasenberg                 |   |



December 3, 1983 – John & Mary Hazen  
December 5, 1992 – Kenny & Deanna Wilson  
December 28, 2005 – Zac & Sarah Leeson

### Baptism Birthdays



- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 7 - Kaitlyn Long<br>Jennifer Long<br>Jacob Long                                     | 16 - Wayne Haake                     |
| 8 - Sharri Millen   | 17 - Karlene Campbell                |
| 9 - Samantha Davis  | 19 - Zac Leeson<br>Paul Welch        |
| 11 - Dianne Allison   | 20 - Alexander Miller<br>Owen Miller |
| 12 - Aurora Raymond<br>Tammy Robinson<br>Lucas Rusk<br>Ashley Wilson<br>Paul Wilson | 21 - Emma Ayers                      |
|   | 25 - Linda Haake                     |

*\*NOTE – Birthdays, anniversaries and baptisms are listed according to our records.  
If you find a mistake or any missing information, please notify the office. Thank You.*

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### MEMBERSHIP AND DIRECTORY CHANGES / MEMORIALS - NOVEMBER REPORT:

**Membership** – Additions – None to report  
Deletions – None to report

**Directory Changes** – None to report

**Memorials** – None to report

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**Reminder... each time you enter the hospital**, be sure to say you are a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island so that the hospital can inform the church. ***If you would like Pastor to know immediately, please have a family member or friend call the office and/or Pastor—otherwise we may not be aware of your hospitalization.*** The hospitals do not regularly call the churches as they once did. Please contact the office when someone is hospitalized or

homebound. The church office phone number is **309-786-3391**; email address is [officeimmanuelri@gmail.com](mailto:officeimmanuelri@gmail.com).

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**THE 2025 FLOWER CHART and THE ETERNAL LIGHT CHART** are posted in the Narthex. **THE 2026 FLOWER CHART and THE ETERNAL LIGHT CHART** will be posted in the Narthex in early December. The cost for Altar Flowers (two vases) is \$30.00 and for Eternal Light is \$10.00. If you sign up, please be sure to check the calendar periodically for the date(s) you signed to donate.



**\*\*PLEASE WRITE OUT ON THE FORM WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE PRINTED IN THE ANNOUNCEMENTS, OR EMAIL THE INFO TO [OFFICEIMMANUELRI@GMAIL.COM](mailto:OFFICEIMMANUELRI@GMAIL.COM). YOU CAN ALSO WRITE A NOTE AND LEAVE IT IN THE OFFERING PLATE FOR THE CHURCH OFFICE.**

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All adults and youth are invited to participate in any or all Bible studies offered at Immanuel. We are thankful we can gather around God's Word. You are welcome to attend anytime.



- **Sunday Adult Bible class** – 10:30 am in the Luther Room.
  - **Sunday School** – 10:30 am in Peter and Mark rooms.
  - **Adult Bible Study** – Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am in Luther Room or on Zoom.
  - **Intergenerational Studies** – Tuesdays at 6:00 pm on Zoom.
  - **For the older youth** – there is a Rock Island Circuit Youth Group. Watch for announcements on dates and times.
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## YOUTH GROUP UPCOMING EVENTS

### Regular Youth Meetings at Immanuel Rock Island

- All Circuit youth are welcome to attend the regularly scheduled Youth Group meetings at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Island.
  - Meeting schedule - First hour: Pastor leads a Bible Study, Second hour: games and snacks.
  - Future meeting dates will be shared via email at the beginning of each month for your reference and monthly planning.
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### ***Remember – we continue to recycle aluminum cans.***

There is a white barrel outside of the kitchen door – west side of the building. Please place your aluminum cans in the barrel and they will be taken to be recycled. The money is then used to purchase gas for the mower at the church. **Thank You.**



### **FROM THE SOCIAL MINISTRY GROUP:**

This year we will again be distributing **Christmas Food Baskets** to those in need. If you know of someone who might need a little extra help during this Holiday Season, please contact Tammy Robinson or Mel Vogel with their name, address, phone number, and the number of people in their household. Due to financial constraints, we will be giving preference to the family and/or friends of our congregation first and if finances hold up, we will take names from outside of the congregation. We have received several generous donations this year and hope to help more families!

**We will be distributing the Christmas Baskets on Monday, December 22nd at the church starting at 11 a.m.**

We will also be looking for helpers to sort, pack and distribute the baskets. Please contact Tammy or the church office to let us know you would be available to help. This is a great mission that the Immanuel Social Ministry team has been carrying down through the years and the recipients of the baskets have been very appreciative! Thank you everyone for your continued support.



In addition to providing Thanksgiving and Christmas Baskets, our Social Ministry continues to help with special needs throughout the year as needed when requested via the Elders or Pastor. Envelopes are provided in your envelope box or use plain envelope, indicating for Social Ministry. If you have any questions, contact the church office or Mel Vogel.

**Another part of our Social Ministry** includes helping support two Seminarian families. If you wish to help with their support, you can place your gift in an envelope with **"Seminarians"** and your envelope number written on it, and place it in the offering plate or bring to the church office. These gifts will be recorded on your Financial Statement and checks will be sent to them quarterly.

### **Names and NEW addresses if you wish to send a card of encouragement, etc.:**

Josh Bieri – Vicarage appointment to  
Faith Lutheran Church  
1407 Main St  
La Crosse, WI 54601

Josh Camp - 2<sup>nd</sup> year at CTSFW  
Josh & Catherine Camp  
7630 Coldsprings Blvd  
Fort Wayne IN 46825



### **Items Needed:**

Men's Deodorant  
Shampoo  
Conditioner

13-gal Trash bags  
33 gal trash bags  
39 gal lawn & leaf trash bags

Toilet paper  
Men's disposable razors  
Napkins

***Please place items in the Christian Care box in the Narthex. Items will be taken to Christian Care.***

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped with the Christian Care meal on October 30th. We served 74 men, women and children a delicious chicken dinner! Special thanks to Millie and Bevy Eckardt who represented the Immanuel Youth Group and served the best part of the meal, dessert!



### LWML UPCOMING EVENTS

#### LWML Christmas Party

Thursday, December 4th at 6 pm • Overlook Village, 941 6th St., Moline  
Graciously hosted by our own Carla Hazen.  
Potluck dinner theme is Mexican Fiesta! All ladies are welcome to join us.

#### Advent Supper and Craft Sale

We will be serving the December 10th meal and will have gift tags/ornaments and pot holders for sale. All donations will benefit our Fort Wayne Seminarians.

### November and December 2025 LWML CID Mission Grant #4 – Healing Spaces for At-Risk Children - \$10,000

Children who come to Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch have experienced significant abuse, neglect, violence, and other heartbreaking traumas, resulting in psychiatric, emotional, behavioral, and/or developmental challenges. The purpose of this project is to build Zurcher Cottage, a new Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, a place of care specifically designed to provide Christ-centered care and treatment for the youngest and highest-need children served at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch.

*How can I help? Pray that God provides the funds to build Zurcher Cottage where Christ-centered care can be given to the most challenged of our youth. Support this grant by donating to your church's LWML group mite fund.*



### Building Upkeep

Thank you to those who have signed up to clean a room/area monthly. We really appreciate the help. If you are interested, there are several areas that haven't been claimed yet. The sign-up sheet is on the table in the Narthex.



**St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Milan is holding their Annual Cookie Walk + Crafts on Saturday, December 6 from 9 am to noon.** Come shop for Christmas goodies – cookies, candies + crafts. All proceeds generated at this event are donated to the Milan Christian Food Pantry. *More information is in the flyer on the table in the Narthex.*



### CHRISTMAS CAROLING Saturday, December 13, 2:30 PM

We will meet at Immanuel at 2:30 pm and travel to local homes to spread some Christmas cheer.



## Holiday Service Schedule 2025

December 3	Wednesday	5:30/6:30 PM	Supper/Advent I
December 10	Wednesday	5:30/6:30 PM	Supper/Advent II
December 17	Wednesday	5:30/6:30 PM	Supper/Advent III – Children’s Program
December 24	Wednesday	2:00 PM	Christmas Eve Service
		6:30 PM	Christmas Eve Candlelight w/HC
December 25	Thursday	9:00 AM	Christmas Day – The Feast of the Nativity
December 28	Sunday	9:00 AM	The First Sunday After Christmas
December 31	Wednesday	6:30 pm	New Year’s Eve Service

### Wednesday Evening Supper and Advent Worship



We are continuing our tradition of inviting our members and the public to join us for a light supper prior to our mid-week Advent Worship Services. Supper will be served at 5:30-6:15 pm in the cafeteria. Our worship service begins at 6:30 PM.

The meals may be soup, sandwiches, veggies, and a dessert. Coffee, tea, milk, lemonade, etc. are provided. The host may keep the free-will offering to cover expenses or donate it to the general benefit of the church.

If you have any questions, please contact one of the Elders.

**Wednesday, December 3 – Board of Elders**

**Wednesday, December 10 - LWML**

**Wednesday, December 17 – Youth Group**



## POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias will decorate the Altar area of the church to commemorate our celebration of the birth of our Lord! Donations towards the cost of the plants are accepted and donor names will be listed in the December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> bulletins.

**(information due by December 15<sup>th</sup>)**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

To give thanks to God \_\_\_\_\_

To celebrate the occasion of \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please place this completed form and monetary donation in an envelope with “POINSETTIAS” written on it along with your name, amount, and offering envelope number. Drop it in the offering plate at a service, or mail it or bring it to the church office by December 15.

VOTER'S ASSEMBLY MEETING MINUTES  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island, IL 61201  
14-SEP-2025  
Following the church service

1. Call to order - Ron Mau
2. Opening prayer - Pastor Astrowski
3. Minutes from 23-MAR-2025 - Linda motioned, Mel second, minutes approved
4. Board and Committee Reports
  - a. 4.1. Board of Finance - Jack Copeland
    - i. Everything on track
  - b. 4.2. Property Committee - Clayton Weisenborn
    - i. Will discuss during old/new business
  - c. 4.3. Board of Education - Burnie Eckardt
    - i. Circuit Wide event (07-SEP-2025) went well
    - ii. Regular Youth Group Meetings are back
    - iii. Next circuit wide event in October at Tanner's Apple Orchard
    - iv. Sunday School is back, 2 classes
  - d. 4.4. Board of Elders - Mel Vogel
    - i. 26-OCT-2025 - Trunk or Treat - 2-4
  - e. 4.5 Pastor's Report
    - i. Circuit forum - 21-SEP-2025
    - ii. St. John's in East Moline is vacant
    - iii. Holy Cross in Moline is still vacant
      1. Pray about stewardship
5. Old Business/Ongoing Business
  - a. 5.1. Insurance Claim - still in arbitration
    - i. Church roof is covered
    - ii. Gym roof needs to be desperately repaired
      1. Mel made a motion to have the roof repaired at 100K, taken from Schragg account in the foundation
6. New Business
  - a. 6.1. Elections
    - i. Eric Campbell nominated for Board of Finance Chair
    - ii. Move to approve the ballot as is



1. President - Scott Welch
  2. Corporate Secretary - Amanda Eckardt
  3. Treasurer/Board of Finance Chair - Eric Campbell
  4. Property Committee - Ron appointed Clayton Weisenborn
  5. Foundation Trustee - Dave Schumaker
  6. Board of Elders - Alex Triage, John Campbell, Mel Vogel, Larry Wiebel, Tyler Werke
  7. Call Committee - Karlene Campbell, Alaina Carter, Linda Haake
- b. Jack and Barb motioned and second. Ballot approved.
7. Adjournment - Nancy motioned, Scott second, approved.
- a. 7.1 Closed with the Lord's Prayer

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02-NOV-2025  
Emergency Voter's Meeting Minutes  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Rock, IL 61201

1. Call to order - President of the Church - Scott Welch
2. Pastor opened with prayer
3. Scott explained the need for meeting
4. Amanda motioned to vote to take funds from Foundations General Fund, Dave 2nd.  
Vote approved.
5. Cathy motioned, Burnie 2nd to adjourn meeting
6. Pastor closed with the benediction

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## DECEMBER 2025 MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE



Week of December 7, 2025 - **Genesis 3:15**

*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*

Week of December 14, 2025 – **Zephaniah 3:17**

*The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.*

Week of December 21, 2025 - **John 1:4**

*In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

Week of December 28, 2025 - **Luke 2:10–11**

*And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."*

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Have you participated in any high school class reunions? Some classes are great at getting together. Other classmates have been thrown to the wind across the country, even the world, and rarely connect. Maybe you have someone from your class that shares old pictures on social media. It's fun to reminisce. But maybe in the midst of that remembering also comes a certain amount of regret, as you think about the wide-eyed enthusiasm you used to have about what you would accomplish in the future, and now it feels like you are just wrapping up.

For some, working on their estate plan may actually feel like giving up, as if most of the living is complete in life. But there is another way to think of it. A Christian estate plan is one of anticipation, as the Lord Jesus will lead us to the glory that He has prepared for us. St. Paul once said, "Nothing can compare to the glory that is about to be revealed in us." (Romans 8) An estate plan looks at physical things, and recognizes they have belonged to the Lord all along. And now we get to put a plan in place, in how our family will be blessed in inheritance and how we can support the work of God's Kingdom in the ministry of the Church. There is no end here, but bright prospects.

Sometimes we need a little help and encouragement to maintain that kind of positive perspective. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help. Contact Scott Radden @ 618-977-4049 or [scott.radden@lfnd.org](mailto:scott.radden@lfnd.org)

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### The Camp CILCA Lowdown

217-487-7497 / [camp@cilca.org](mailto:camp@cilca.org) / 4124 Camp Cilca Rd. Cantrall, IL 62625



#### SAVE THE DATE:

##### ❖ VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

- **Joyful Hearts Christmas on December 12-13, 2025**
- Volunteers are needed to assist campers with disabilities. Receive free food and lodging for the night and have an experience you won't forget serving God's beloved children.
- [www.cilca.org/summer-camp](http://www.cilca.org/summer-camp)

##### ❖ MEN, Save the Date: February 27-28, 2026

- **ACT LIKE MEN WOODCUTTERS' RETREAT**
- Work hard and grow in God's Word.
- [www.cilca.org/act-like-men-woodcutters-retreat](http://www.cilca.org/act-like-men-woodcutters-retreat)

##### ❖ End of the Year Donations

- Do you want to support the work done at Camp CILCA and bless children with a beautiful outdoor space to hear and grow in God's Word?
- Go to [www.cilca.org/supportdonate](http://www.cilca.org/supportdonate)

Camp CILCA exists to strengthen and foster faith in Jesus Christ and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting. Find out more at [www.cilca.org](http://www.cilca.org)

#### Summer Camp 2026 registration is OPEN!

- Register before April 1, 2026 and save with the Early Bird Discount!
  - **Register today to save your spot. Space is limited!**



## ***News You Can Use***

### **Current Dollar For Mission Project**

**Project:** Replace original kitchen equipment in the sexton's apartment at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb

Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb was dedicated in 1969, but some kitchen equipment in the apartment for the live-in student who takes care of the student center (the sexton) has not been replaced since then. DFM funds would be used to replace the original kitchen equipment.

**Amount to be funded:** \$11,000.00

**MUSIC FOR MISSIONS** – St. John's Lutheran Church (711 Court Street) in Pekin is hosting a Sacred Music Concert and Hymn Sing in support of our Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, our LC-MS Central Illinois District Campus Ministry at Western Illinois University, Macomb, on Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

We will join together in singing some hymns, and in listening to sacred organ, choir, vocal solo, and handbell music, all under the theme, "Hymns of Our Heavenly Home." Featured musicians will include guest organist Peter Wykert, vocalists Allison Harley and Jennifer Rosa, as well as the St. John's Hand Bell and Sanctuary Choirs. A free-will offering will be gathered to support our Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb (under the leadership of Pastor Chris Hull). Refreshments will be served following the program.

Please set aside the time to participate in and enjoy the music program, and to support our Central Illinois District mission work. For more information, you may contact the church office at 309-347-2136.

### **2026 Youth Bible Bowl**

**Date:** Will be in the spring of 2026. We are still working on the date.

**Topic:** "The Gospel According to St. Matthew"

The Gospel according to St. Matthew gives a summary of what we need to know in order to have salvation from sin, the devil, and death. St. Matthew's Gospel records the most important teachings of Jesus and the key events in Jesus' life. Plan to study "the Gospel according to St. Matthew" with youth (junior and senior high [grades 6-12]) as thoroughly as you can, to prepare them to answer questions in your Circuit and at the District Bible Bowl in the spring, and (most importantly) so that by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit they grow in their faith that Jesus truly is the Son of God and our Savior.

Contact Rev Mark Eddy ([zionlcms@juno.com](mailto:zionlcms@juno.com)) for additional information.

### **Central Illinois Church Extension Fund Investment Rate at 3.75% for 11 Months!**

Even though the Federal Reserve just cut interest rates, the CID-CEF is still offering its 11-month investment at 3.75%. This is a limited-time offer, so please take advantage of this opportunity to assist our churches and schools in financing the expansion of their ministries. At the same time, you receive the added blessing of a great interest rate!

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### **German Christmas Worship Service at Immanuel in Springfield, IL**

Immanuel Lutheran in Springfield is inviting you to its first German language Christmas Worship Service. If you speak the language and would like to praise God in German, this will be a Gottesdienst für alle. Or, if you don't speak German, come experience worship in a different language and see how the Word of God is comforting and effective even through a language barrier. Almost all of the worship service will be familiar since we will use a traditional divine setting. The sermon will also be spoken in German, but an English transcript will be provided so everyone will be able to follow along. Please invite anyone you think might be interested to join us on December 21st, 6:30pm at Immanuel Lutheran Springfield 2750, E Sangamon Ave. Springfield, IL 62702

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## **LCMS Stewardship Ministry**

*“We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thess. 5:12-13).*

Have you finished your Christmas shopping yet? Do you have a person or two on your list that you just don't know what to give them? While I know you are running short of ideas...dad doesn't really want another tie, and your kid's teacher doesn't need another coffee mug. It can be nothing short of maddening to try to figure things out in the middle of this busy season!

As stewards of all of life and life's resources, we know that life is more than giving gifts. We stewards never want to take anything the Lord provides for granted. During this season of Advent and Christmas, it is a great idea to do whatever you can to be a faithful steward of your pastor. Even more so than the rest of the year, the demands on their time, their presence and their stewardship of the Gospel in the congregation become heightened.

The demands on pastors can wear them down and wear them out. How does the steward in the congregation serve as a faithful steward of the treasure that is their pastor? Here are a few ideas:

- Put them at the top of your prayer list. – Pray that the Lord guards them against the weariness that makes them susceptible to the work of the devil.
- Make worship a priority – St. Paul admonishes the Thessalonians and us to respect those who labor among us. There is no greater way to steward your pastor than to respect him enough to show up and receive what he has been sent to offer in the proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Holy Sacraments.
- Be receptive to his work – If your pastor is tasked with calling you to repentance or encouraging you to be in worship, know that he is only caring for your soul.
- Esteem him highly – Take the time to thank him for his faithful service to Christ, the congregation and your family.
- Be at peace – This is an easy time for even minor annoyances to get blown out of proportion and become full-blown conflict. This not only spoils the season of Advent and Christmas, but it also spoils our stewardship of the Gospel and those who serve us in that Gospel. Remember that Jesus came into the world to be the Prince of Peace. This is an act of grace and mercy. The steward seeks to reflect this toward their pastor and their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Stewardship at Christmas can be a challenge. Stewardship of your pastor during this time of the year is critical to our shared stewardship of the Gospel at a time of year when many are more open to hear and receive it.

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## **Fall EastSide Mission News**

The food drives from the Churches for our little pantry at Davenport's EastSide Mission have been amazing. With uncertainty in the job market, and from various government agencies regarding aid, along with the increase in people needing to use food banks, this help from the Congregations is greatly appreciated by our neighbors & members. Big thanks go out to our Circuit Church family!

Pastor Andy is now picking up 6 children; from the neighborhood, and from VBS. One of the children has been bringing a friend along who is really enjoying attending. And of these, the 3 siblings have asked to be baptized. We look forward to that! With the help of Dixie, Aticia, and Shalonda, there will be a Christmas program and dinner. The children have begun rehearsing their parts & the songs.

Keep us in your prayers, and we owe you all MUCH gratitude for how much you have already done!

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Christ the King (Cristo Rey) Lutheran Church  
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Rev. Pablo G. Domínguez



## December 2025

Advent season is a time for repentance as we prepare for the coming of Jesus. From pulpits in our churches, pastors preach about repentance in their sermons, but who wants to acknowledge sin and be repentant when everything in life is going well? Repentance is a change in our hearts brought about by the Holy Spirit. Sadly, God's word is ignored by many in this sinful world. It would be easy for a pastor to become discouraged when people choose to ignore God's Word rather than heed it. But we need to remain faithful in our preaching by repeating the very words of John the Baptist *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."* (Matthew 3:2)

John The Baptist said: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.  
Matthew 3:2

Today, we should say the same.

God's Word never fails to produce results. We have that promise from the prophet Isaiah, *"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."* (Isaiah 55:10-11)

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.* Luke 2:6-7



Christmas is just around the corner. Stores, malls and streets are decorated with multicolor lights and stars. Gifts wrapped in bright colors surround the Christmas trees. We hear about plans for parties with delicious meals and beverages. Sadly, in some cases, parents teach their children that Santa Claus is the most important figure of Christmas because he brings amazing gifts and happiness to all. We can't forget to mention the movies and books which picture and tell about Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Frosty the Snowman, The Grinch and others. Radio stations broadcast Christmas songs, and many people will say: "Merry Christmas or Feliz Navidad". Some will say Happy Holidays in an attempt to be politically correct. The world would say It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year, but in many cases the name of the baby Jesus is not mentioned, as the world seems to ignore and reject Jesus, the Savior of the world.



Even as you and I are involved in Christmas festivities, we must not forget that we are sinners who desperately need a Savior. Jesus desires that all recognize Him as Savior and King and live a restored life. As Christians, we celebrate this season with joyful hymns, which offer praise to God for sending the

best gift of all to this world, His Only Begotten Son. At this Christmas time and really, in all seasons we must thank God for filling our hearts with the love of Jesus and granting us the ability to serve Him with our whole heart, mind and soul. Unlike the inn at Bethlehem where there was no room for the Holy Family, the Holy Spirit opens our hearts to receive and welcome Jesus, the Savior of the world.

**All  
of us  
here at Cristo  
Rey want to wish  
all of you a Blessed  
Christmas and a Joyous  
New Year And THANK YOU  
most sincerely for your prayers,  
your donations of food items, clothing  
and furniture and your financial gifts.  
We consider ourselves partners with you  
as we take the Gospel to the Hispanic people.**

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## **Daily Readings for DECEMBER from the Lutheran Service Book, pages 299-304**

Dec 1	Is. 7:10-8:8	1 Peter 3:1-22
Dec 2	Is. 8:9-9:7	1 Peter 4:1-19
Dec 3	Is. 9:8-10:11	1 Peter 5:1-14
Dec 4	Is. 10:12-27a, 33-34	2 Peter 1:1-21
Dec 5	Is. 11:1-12:6	2 Peter 2:1-22
Dec 6	Is. 14:1-23	2 Peter 3:1-18
Dec 7	Is. 24:1-13	1 John 1:1-2:14
Dec 8	Is. 24:14-25:12	1 John 2:15-29

### *Obad. 1-21*

Dec 9	Is. 26:1-19	1 John 3:1-24
Dec 10	Is. 26:20-27:13	1 John 4:1-21
Dec 11	Is. 28:14-29	1 John 5:1-21
		<i>2 John 1-13</i>
		<i>3 John 1-15</i>

Dec 12	Is. 29:1-14	Jude 1-25
Dec 13	Is. 29:15-30:14	Rev. 1:1-20
Dec 14	Is. 30:15-26	Rev. 2:1-29
Dec 15	Is. 30:27-31:9	Rev. 3:1-22
Dec 16	Is. 32:1-20	Rev. 4:1-11
Dec 17	Is. 33:1-24	Rev. 5:1-14
Dec 18	Is. 34:1-2, 8-35:10	Rev. 6:1-17

### *Micah 1:1-7:20*

Dec 19	Is. 40:1-17	Rev. 7:1-17
Dec 20	Is. 40:18-41:10	Rev. 8:1-13
Dec 21	Is. 42:1-25	Rev. 9:1-12
Dec 22	Is. 43:1-24	Rev. 9:13-10:11
Dec 23	Is. 43:25-44:20	Rev 11:1-19

## **Christmas Season**

Dec 24	Is. 44:21-45:13, 20-25	Rev. 12:1-17
	<i>Dan. 10:1-12:13 Is. 48:1-22</i>	
Dec 25	Is. 49:1-18	Matt. 1:1-17
Dec 26	Is. 49:22-26; 50:4-51:8, 12-16	Matt. 1:18-25
Dec 27	Is. 51:17-52:12	Matt. 2:1-12
Dec 28	Is. 52:13-54:10	Matt. 2:13-23
Dec 29	Is. 55:1-13	Luke 1:1-25
Dec 30	Is. 58:1-59:3, 14-21	Luke 1:26-38
Dec 31	Is. 60:1-22	Luke 1:39-56

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# DECEMBER 2025

## Immanuel Lutheran Church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b>  6 Book Club	<b>2</b> 7 Matins 9:30 Bible Study  6 Intergen. Bible Study	<b>3</b> 9 CHALK Home School Christmas Party  5:30 Supper 6:30 Advent Midweek I	<b>4</b>  6 LWML Christmas Party 7 Circuit Youth Group Planning Meeting	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 7:15 Bd of Elders 9 Worship w/HC 10:30 Bible Study/ Sunday School	<b>8</b> 9 Winkel  6 Book Club	<b>9</b> 7 Matins 9:30 Bible Study  6 Intergen. Bible Study	<b>10</b>  5:30 Supper 6:30 Advent Midweek II	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  2:30 Caroling
<b>14</b> 9 Worship w/HC 10:30 Bible Study/ Sunday School	<b>15</b>  6 Book Club	<b>16</b> 7 Matins 9:30 Bible Study  6 Intergen. Bible Study	<b>17</b>  5:30 Supper 6:30 Advent Midweek III/ Children's Pgrm.	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>  <i>Deadline for submitting items for THE IMAGE</i>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 9 Worship w/HC 10:30 Bible Study/ Sunday School	<b>22</b>  11 Christmas Basket Distribution	<b>23</b> 7 Matins	<b>24</b> <b>CHRISTMAS EVE</b> 2 Christmas Eve Service 6:30 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service [Office Closed]	<b>25</b> <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b> 9 Feast of the Nativity  [Office Closed]	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9 Worship w/HC 10:30 Bible Study/ Sunday School	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 7 Matins	<b>31</b> <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>  6:30 New Year's Eve Service			

*Calendar is subject to change. Any changes will be listed in the weekly announcements.*



**THE IMAGE** is the monthly newsletter published for members and friends of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3300 24<sup>th</sup> St., Rock Island, Illinois. Immanuel is a member of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod.

### **Sunday Schedule**

Worship Service with Holy Communion at 9:00 AM

Bible Study at 10:30 AM – Sunday School at 10:30 AM

We invite you to join us for worship and Bible Study and the fellowship of Christians who share in the joy of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Pastor: Rev. Leonard A. Astrowski, Jr.**

**Organists: Christine Roth and Katherine Cobert**

**Church Office Hours:** Monday – Thursday, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

**Our Website:** [www.immanuelri.org](http://www.immanuelri.org)

**Church Office Phone:** 309-786-3391

**Pastor Astrowski's Phone:** 989-326-0199

**Email Addresses:** Pastor Astrowski – [pastrowski@gmail.com](mailto:pastrowski@gmail.com) Church Office – [officeimmanuelri@gmail.com](mailto:officeimmanuelri@gmail.com)

**Facebook Page:**

<https://www.facebook.com/Immanuel-Lutheran-Church-RockIsland-IL-LCMS-179175395513326/>

**All Sunday services are “live” streamed on Facebook at 9 am Sundays and posted to the church’s YouTube channel at:**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWLcoXZtMq13HOqRo\\_uifqg/featured?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWLcoXZtMq13HOqRo_uifqg/featured?view_as=subscriber).

***Additionally, you can tune in to Pastor’s nightly devotion each evening at 9 pm “live” on Facebook or find it on the church’s YouTube page later.***