

# Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church



## December 2023

- Page 2,3**—Message from Interim Pastor  
John Kuziej
- Page 3**—One Christmas Eve Service this year
- Page 4**—Message from Bishop Katherine Finegan
- Page 5**—Blue Christmas Ecumenical Worship,  
Snow Shoveling Volunteers Needed
- Page 6**—Children’s Christmas Program  
Cinnamon Roll Fundraiser,  
The Giving Tree
- Page 7**—Thank you’s
- Page 8, 9**—Lefse and Bake Sale
- Page 10**—Winter Fun at FLLC, Youth Activities
- Page 11**—Elementary School Retreat at FLLC
- Page 12**—Confirmation, First Communion
- Page 13**—First Communion Retreat
- Page 14**—RAFP—Hodag Kids
- Page 15**—Lutheran Disaster Response
- Page 16**—Council Minutes
- Page 17**—Salvation Army Bell Ringing
- Page 18, 19**—Confirmation Class Serves Community
- Page 20**—This is Stewardship!
- Page 21**—NATH Notes
- Page 22**—Calendar
- Page 23**—Birthdays, Financial Summary,  
Attendance, Anniversaries

## Rev. John Kuziej - Interim Pastor

Immanuel Church Office: 715-362-5910

Emergency-Cell Phone: 906-932-4165

Email: [johnckuziej2@gmail.com](mailto:johnckuziej2@gmail.com)

Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00 am — Noon  
and by appointment

## Kari Britton - Administrative Assistant

[immanuelsecretary2015@gmail.com](mailto:immanuelsecretary2015@gmail.com)

Office Phone: 715-362-5910

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am — Noon

## Sheree Vanden Heuvel - Financial Secretary

[finimmanuel@gmail.com](mailto:finimmanuel@gmail.com)

Cell Phone: 715-360-3176

Member of the ELCA Churchwide [elca.org](http://elca.org) &  
the Northern Great Lakes Synod [nglsynod.org](http://nglsynod.org)



Visit us on our Website @  
[Immanuelrhinelander.org](http://Immanuelrhinelander.org)

*"Inspired by God's grace to love and serve all"*

## Message from Interim Pastor John Kuziej

Many of us look forward to the Christmas Eve service. The service has familiar carols we enjoy singing. There may be special music. I still remember a service with the hymn “O Holy Night” sung with power and feeling by a high school student. Then with the lights dimmed and our candles lighted, we sing “Silent Night.” Christmas Eve may be the only service during the year when the sanctuary is filled. I have talked to older members who remember the Christmas Eve service at midnight. This was the first service to celebrate the birth of our Savior. On Christmas Day two more services could be scheduled, one quite early in the morning, and the second one later. But as we know, times change. Some churches, especially smaller congregations, do not have services on Christmas Day.

I have wonderful memories of Christmas Eve services with full sanctuaries, lots of kids, and beautiful music. My most memorable Christmas service had a considerably smaller number. The number in attendance was two. This was not a Christmas Eve service, but a service called “Blue Christmas”, scheduled the evening of the winter solstice, the day with the least amount of daylight. The days of darkness more than light can make us sad, especially in times of grief. One person showed up for the service. He was a friend of mine, and we shared a common sadness at Christmas; our wives had died years before. It was decided between us not to follow the prepared order of service. We left the sanctuary and found comfortable places to sit in the Fellowship Hall. We shared our feelings about a festive time of year without a deeply loved one. We talked about our hearts not in the mood for common Christmas customs of shopping for gifts and decorating the home. We shared memories of the past when our wives were alive. This was a Christmas service but without hymns and a sermon. It was a comfort to share sadness and affirm that was just as appropriate for Christmas as joy. The baby in the manger was God-in-the-flesh. Mary and Joseph were poor. The angels came to shepherds, hard-working men with no special status. Soon the Holy Family would be refugees fleeing a tyrant who feared Jesus, the newborn king, as a threat. As the gospel of John wrote, Jesus is the eternal God, who came to dwell among us. This ‘dwelling among us’ meant no privilege; the gospel of Matthew stated twice that Jesus came to this world to bear all our infirmity and all our grief.

I heard on the radio that leaders of the various Christians churches in Israel, and the Middle East, keep Christmas celebrations at a low key. It was not deemed appropriate during this time of war—war between Israel and Hamas—to have splashy decorations, processions and parties. This did not mean Christmas worship be cancelled but may worship emphasize compassion for the many families who are suffering the pains of loss. It does not matter whether one is Jewish, Muslim, or Christian. The Christmas gospel does not take sides. The Bible tells us that God loves this world. The Jewish scriptures, what we call the Old Testament, speaks of God as “slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.” I do not know

the teachings of Islam, but Muslims often pray referring to God as merciful. With so much suffering in the world, some conclude “there is no god”. At Christmas the faithful believe in God, God who came as Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, and who will suffer. Jesus will not only suffer under Pontius Pilate on the cross, but his whole ministry was also described as compassion or suffering with the people he met. By sharing pain, sharing infirmity, bearing grief, Jesus healed hearts and blessed them with hope.

I think there are two kinds of Christmas. There is the Christmas spirit with people happily decorating their homes, baking cookies, buying presents and feeling generous. We see Santa Claus in stores with children on their laps. People want to be Santa as well, and we see people wearing the red ‘Santa’ hat. Strangely some want to be reindeer and they sport antlers on their head. It is all fun, this ‘jolly, holly Christmas.’ This Christmas spirit is not trivial because it inspires generosity—donations to food pantries, Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign, and winter clothing for the poor. At Frederick Place there is an outpouring of generosity for those temporarily without a home. Literally gifts have come in by the truckload. Praise God for the Christmas spirit.

But there is another part of Christmas I call the “Christmas soul”. The news of Christmas is good news for people who may look fine, but deep down they are carrying sadness and even despair. May the Christmas gospel reach such people in deep pain. Jesus came into this world not to encourage shopping but to lift the soul with the gift of love that is immeasurable. The Christmas message is summarized well by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians. He wrote, “For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake, he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” Again, God bless the Christmas spirit and enlarge it, so we reach out and touch with kindness and understanding someone who is sad. And God bless the Christmas soul: may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ fill your soul with affirmation of worth and living hope.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Communion Worship  
Sunday, December 24  
One service only at 4:30 pm**



**Christmas Eve Morning—4th Sunday in Advent 9:00 am**

*“In the beginning,  
God created the heavens and the earth,  
the earth was a formless void and  
darkness covered the face of the deep,  
while a wind from God swept over the  
face of the waters. ~ Genesis 1:1*

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

Have you ever ventured down the craft aisle of some do-it-yourself store? I remember being given a make your own sand art, make your own paint by number picture, and cross stitch kits with all the embroidery floss included. Maybe you graduated to the kits that brew your own beer or make your own birdhouse or nail together a raised garden bed.

I ordered a baker's rack once that required assembly. It was very handy to have step by step instructions paired with pictures and arrows, connecting part a to part b. Sure, I put it together wrong a few times before I got it right, but it now stands correctly assembled.

It was easy to begin these projects because I had a guide, instructions, I knew what the finished product was supposed to look like. Beginning was easy because the end was clear.

We know something about beginnings. We begin new jobs, new school years, move into a new house or apartment, welcome a new child, initiate a new ministry. Even without a kit, we know what it is to “start from scratch” when there are no pieces to put together, no foundation already laid, no past to shape the future, no ready-made mix that only needs eggs to make the cake.

Certainly, God didn't have much to work with “in the beginning.” God has a knack of how to make something from nothing. Such creative success takes a certain divine skill set. It is a God-only talent.

And yet, God shares God's own creative genius with us. And that is a good thing. Because we as congregations, we as the church, are at the beginning again. We need the creative spirit that only God can give because there are a host of things that are unclear.

### **Do we have all the pieces we need?**

I say yes. I believe God provides the resources, the people, and the way forward for whatever God would have happen in and through your congregation.

### **Are we starting from scratch?**

Not really. There is recent and a collective memory of the way things used to be, not only pre-pandemic, but pre-eighties. Whether these expectations, or even hopes, will be a help or a hindrance to new efforts remains to be seen.

### **Do we have clear instructions?**

I say no. :) This is where we need the collective wisdom of the body of Christ listening intently to the Spirit and finding a way forward together. The goal is not to recreate the church of the past but to lean into the future church that is becoming. The Church is being transformed. Our job is to be faithful in this moment of history that will last years. Keeping the witness of Jesus of Nazareth as the lens through which all else is considered, we can't go far wrong.

## Are we clear on what the finished product will be?

Maybe a little, but not really. The Church, capital C, is timeless. God will always call people to faith in Christ. The Spirit will always gather believers together. The Bible will always be treasured and provide an inspiring word to proclaim Christ. But what the Church looks like, how it sounds, where it gathers, the liturgy, traditions, music, language, rhythms, might all be reshaped and reformed. The wind of God is sweeping over the face of the Church. We may not be a formless void, but our shape is being re-formed, slowly but surely, and yet certainly faster than anyone is comfortable with.

As Congregations are investing energy into new or resurrected ministry efforts, we are beginning again in a new set of circumstances. It feels both familiar and foreign. It is both exciting and overwhelming, hopeful and anxious.

I pray God's blessings upon your efforts. You're not creating something from nothing, but I think it can feel like that.

God is with you, inspiring, energizing, and speaking the Word Christ into any darkness, saying, "Let there be...Church!"

Yours in Christ,  
Bishop Katherine Finegan

## Ecumenical Worship Service being Offered

Blue Christmas  
December 21st @ 7:00 pm  
at St. Augustine's  
Episcopal Church



## SNOW SHOVELING

Volunteers are needed to shovel snow this winter. Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or contact the office.

Thank you to John Plautz and Devon Vanden Heuvel for volunteering for December and January!



## Youth Christmas Program –December 10th during 9:00 am worship



### Cinnamon Roll Call



The Youth that are attending the national youth gathering next summer will be doing a cinnamon roll sale fundraiser in January. Preorders will be taken starting in December through early January.

Keep an eye or ear out for more information.



The Giving Tree is up in the Gathering room! Please stop by and choose an ornament or two from the tree and purchase a gift for those in need, once again for Friendly Village and Heritage House.

*ALL gifts are due back before Sunday December 11th!*

**PLEASE remember to add your name to the list on the podium next to the ornament number you choose.** We will also have envelopes for the Backpack program!

*Thanks from the Outreach Committee*



### WARM FOR WINTER!

Now is the time to clean out your closets and bring your boots, mittens, hats, jackets, or other warm for winter items and place in the Warm for Winter box in the narthex to be distributed at the First Congregational United Church of Christ.



## Thank You for Serving

Thank you to everyone who donated food and volunteered in any capacity for our Stewardship Brunch.

Thank you to Joanne O'Brien for updating our news board with newspaper articles.

Thank you to all our members who serve on Sunday mornings reading, ushering, helping with altar guild, serving communion, providing coffee treats, playing in the band, singing in the choir, counting offerings, and helping with the live stream. Please sign up in the Narthex to help with serving.



*Thank you to all the members of Immanuel who continue to use their gifts and talents to further the kingdom of God. (Especially those who work behind the scenes!)*



Thank you to everyone who donated blood at our blood drive on November 28th!

Additional thanks to Jackie Waldorf for organizing this life-saving event.

## Pastoral Visits

Immanuel Lutheran Church has welcomed Pastor John Kuziej as our Administrative Interim Pastor. He is happy to schedule visits with home-bound individuals and is also available for hospital visits. Please feel free to contact him if you have these needs. He has office hours at Immanuel on Tuesdays from 10:00 am until noon and is also available by appointment.

## Newsletter Available Electronically

If you would rather read the newsletter electronically, you can access a copy on our website @ [immanuelrhinelander.org/newsletter](http://immanuelrhinelander.org/newsletter)

**OFFICE HOURS**  
**Tuesday & Thursday**  
**9:00 am-NOON**



THE TUESDAY MORNING CREW MEETS EVERY TUESDAY MORNING TO PERFORM ODD JOBS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN OUR CHURCH. PLEASE REACH OUT TO JOHN PLAUTZ IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP! 715-367-3762  
[jeplautz@hotmail.com](mailto:jeplautz@hotmail.com)



Thank you to all who helped out making lefse!  
127 packages of lefse were made, which is 508 pieces of lefse for the  
bake sale. Your hard work was much appreciated! WELCA



**LEFSE AND BAKE SALE  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2ND  
COFFEE AND SAMPLES 9:00 AM  
SALE STARTS AT 9:30 AM**





## WINTER FUN AT FORTUNE LAKE

Who says winter isn't fun? Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp in Crystal Falls, Michigan (in the U.P.) will be hosting a Winter Wonderland Retreat from January 12-14 at the camp. You'll be able to experience the winter at Fortune Lake with outdoor activities (sledding, tubing, snowshoeing, snow painting), opportunities to explore local venues (like Ski Brule) and time to enjoy the amenities at Fortune Lake (like a sauna).

This is open to people of ALL AGES, meaning it's open to families, youth groups, grandparents, friends, etc.

You can find out more at Fortune Lake's website at

**<https://fortunelake.org/event/winter-wonderland-retreat/>**

or talk to Cory about getting registered for the event!

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

The Youth have been busy recently at Immanuel. As you'll see in this newsletter we had a small group attend the Elementary School Fall Retreat in October at Fortune Lake, we had youth gather to help prepare a meal for Frederick Place, we had two kids celebrate their first communion and we had one celebrate his Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation).

We also signed up five youth and three adult leaders for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering coming up this July in New Orleans. Making their way for the week-long event will be adult leaders Becky Eades, Sarah Willoughby, Christy Dellenbach and youth Johanna, Callie, Tommy, Isaiah and Joshua!

We'll be doing some fundraising activities to help offset the cost of this trip. One of those fundraisers we'll be doing in January will be a cinnamon roll sale, much like we did a few years back for a fundraiser. We'll let you know as it gets closer when you can start to order.

***What other youth activities would your youth like to do? We're looking for ideas.***

Let Cory know! It could be something at the church or somewhere else (bowling, movie night, sledding (if we get snow), ice fishing, etc.).



In early October, Christy Dellenbach and three youth — Natalie, Haven and Lizzy — traveled to the U.P. to spend a night at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp for the Elementary School Fall Retreat. The youth got to play games, have Bible Study and enjoy Fortune Lake.



## CONFIRMED IN CHRIST

Joshua Willoughby completed confirmation classes this year and celebrated during service on Sunday, October 22. The verse he chose as his confirmation verse was Joshua 1:9 — *“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”* Joshua is pictured here with Pastor John Kuziej and Allie Johnson, who taught confirmation this past year.



## FIRST COMMUNION

Celebrating their first communions on Sunday, October 22 were Broden Kohnhorst and Haven Willoughby. Congrats to the two youth on this achievement.

## FIRST COMMUNION RETREAT

On Reformation Sunday, October 29th, Broden Kohnhorst and Haven Willoughby received their first Holy Communion. Two days before, Broden and Haven participated in a First Communion retreat. They learned the definition of a sacrament and studied the biblical texts of Passover, the Last Supper, and Jesus feeding the multitudes. Broden and Haven also took a closer look at the Communion service: Jesus who called the bread his body, and the cup of wine his blood shed for a new covenant of the forgiveness of sins. Broden and Haven learned Holy Communion strengthens the church to serve. Broden and Haven served the Immanuel congregation by helping make the bread for Holy Communion under the direction of Sarah Willoughby. Enough bread was made for two Sundays! Broden and Haven filled 12-pint jars of ingredients for bean soup. They sold the soup jars on Sunday for the price of \$5 each. The soup sold out quickly and earned more than expected; \$100 was collected. The money was donated to E.L.C.A. World Hunger, teaching Holy Communion unifies the church throughout the world. Wherever the church is in the world, we are the Body of Christ called to encourage and help each other. Broden and Haven were a joy to teach with their enthusiasm; many thanks to Sarah Willoughby for all her help. Pastor John



# Helping To Build A Hunger-Free Community



**RAFP**  
627 Coon Street  
Rhineland, WI

*We strive to achieve food security for everyone in our community through collaboration, cooperation, advocacy, resource sharing, and increased public awareness.*

## Hodag Kids

**Because Full Bellies Make Strong Bodies, Smart Brains & Healthy Hearts.**

### Weekend Food For Kids

Weekend Food For Kids is in partnership with the School District of Rhineland to provide kids with a bag of nutritious and easy to prepare food for over the weekend during the academic school year. Students can sign up for the program through their school counselor.



### Hodag Snack Attack



The Hodag Snack Attack provides schools with healthy snacks to have on hand to support students during the school day. The goal of the Hodag Snack Attack is to support the school community through providing staff with the tools they need and students with the nutritional support they need.

### Hodag Food Wagon

The Hodag Food Wagon offers a weekly bag of food to children and youth during the summer. Bags are available at the District of Rhineland Library July through August. In addition, the UW Extension Food-Wise program offers fun activities and healthy recipes. This program does not require registration and is free.



**Thank you to our November Food Pantry crew for sharing the love of Christ through serving!** Volunteering is a great way to show the love of Christ to those in our community. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Darlene Machtan. Immanuel volunteers the 2nd Saturday of each month from 8:45 am—11:30 am.



**“I’ll never feel alone,  
and I’ll take the help of  
others to withstand any  
disaster situation.”**  
—SURYA

## Building confidence in the wake of disaster

**F**looding is not uncommon in India, especially during the rainy season.

The city of Cuttack is bordered by the Mahanadi and Kathajodi rivers, so it often floods in the summer. But the flooding in 2022 was more severe than usual. When the waters swept through Surya Tudu’s house, she and her neighbors managed to move only some of their belongings to higher ground.

Surya is an Adivasi (Indigenous) woman and the mother of two small children. She used to be a domestic worker, but a broken leg forced her to stop working. Because Surya lost her main source of income, she didn’t have much money to buy food or supplies for her family after the floods.

Lutheran World Service India Trust (LWSIT), a longtime partner of Lutheran Disaster Response, reacts quickly to flooding, often prioritizing support for Dalit and Adivasi families like Surya’s.

Immediately after the flooding, Surya received food from the government, but it lasted only a few days. She and her family were among hundreds of families to receive food and hygiene supplies from LWSIT. The food lasted weeks, and the hygiene kits helped prevent waterborne illnesses, a common concern after major flooding. Other families also received tarps and additional materials to build temporary shelters after losing their homes.



Lutheran Disaster Response shares hope, healing and renewal with people in the United States and around the world whose lives have been disrupted by disasters. Your gifts support disaster survivors as they work to rebuild.

## **Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Minutes October 11, 2023**

Hybrid Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

Attendees: Joanne Barrix, Mary Wolf, Tina Schmitz, Glenn Johnson, Richard Laddusire, Christy Dellenbach, Charlie Strong, Kristine Mladucky, and Pastor John Kuziej.

Absent: Linda Kau, John Plautz

Devotions: Richard Laddusire.

Meeting minutes from September 13, 2023 were approved as printed.

### ***Pastor/Ministry Report:***

Pastor John continued the ministry to the nursing homes and shut-ins. The 2nd Tuesday of the month Pastor will be at Milestone Senior Care Center at 10am for services. This is an addition to his visits to Friendly Village on the 3rd Tuesday and Rennes on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 10am. Everyone is welcome to attend.

The funeral preparations for Fred McCue were discussed.

There will be confirmation and first communion celebration on Oct 29.

Pastor attended the meeting of the Rhinelander Ministry Association at St. Augustine. There will be a 7pm ecumenical service on November 22 for the community which is the evening before Thanksgiving. There will be a Blue Christmas ecumenical service there also on December 21 at 7pm.

### ***Long Term Items:***

1. Witness: Outreach to nursing homes has been expanded with the addition of Milestone to the visitation schedule.
2. Stewardship Sunday will be in November. The church committees need to review their finances and provide information for the 2024 budget.
3. Staff evaluations will be held at the end of the year.

### ***Short-Term Items:***

#### **A. Old Business**

1. No new information from the Call committee.
2. Facilities Update: A down payment to a contractor was made to have the roof fixed. The contractor needs temperatures in the 50's in order for the roofing to bond. Repairs will have to be put off until next year if there isn't warmer weather this fall. Heat tapes may be needed this winter to minimize snow build up in the areas to be repaired. Additional landscaping is planned for spring.
3. Answer the call raised \$506. Items were purchased and donated to the Personal Essentials Pantry hosted at the Methodist Church. This included the \$250 from Thrivent that was obtained by Glenn Johnson.
4. Immanuel Lutheran is now a member of the Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce. This provides a listing in their brochure with a link to our web site. Our bazaar should be listed under community activities.

## **B. New Business:**

1. Fall Stewardship Emphasis: Time and talent sheets will be used, the same as last year. Talent sheets will be reviewed and lists prepared of those willing to help will be made and they will be contacted as the need arises. The prayer chain has been redone. Stewardship Sunday will be on November 12 with a brunch to follow.
2. There will be openings on the church council for 2024. Interested members can contact any of the church council for more information.
3. Christmas is on a Monday this year. There will be a Christmas Eve service on Sunday, December 24th at 4:30pm. This is in addition to the regular Sunday service at 9:00 am.
4. A list of the duties for opening and closing the church on Sunday has been prepared and is on the table in the room located to the left of the altar.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:  
Richard Laddusire

Open and closing the Church on Sunday November: Charlie; December: Glenn; January: Kristine  
Devotions in November: Charlie; December: Mary; January: Kristine

**ALL OFFERINGS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31ST IN  
ORDER TO BE LISTED ON GIVING STATEMENTS FOR 2023.**



REGISTER TO  
**RING™**



[www.registertoring.com](http://www.registertoring.com)

The Red Kettle campaign raises money for The Salvation Army.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a ringer please register at:  
[www.registertoring.com](http://www.registertoring.com) or call Jackie Schmeider at 715-550-1419.

If you have any other questions, please contact Dianne Syms at 920-517-6148.





Several youth from Immanuel's confirmation class and beyond helped prepare the October meal for Frederick Place. The youth made lasagna for the homeless shelter and also brownies. The kids also got to enjoy some pizza during the night! Thank you to the youth for stepping up and volunteering your time to help feed the hungry! Leading adults were Becky Eades and Sarah Willoughby. Youth helping were Tommy Eades, Joshua Willoughby, Natalie Dellenbach and Callie Kress.



## **Did You Know?....**

When we at Immanuel ask you to prepare an estimate of giving for the year, we have three categories to choose from: General Fund, Building Fund and Benevolence. On our envelopes, we have these three categories and the given amount is separated into the three different funds. The monthly financial summary shows the giving for each of the three funds and this is so you as the giver can choose where you believe your money is the most needed.

Now, let's think about Benevolence. The definition is goodness and kindness. This is a term that is kind of old. Perhaps a better term for our use would be Mission Support. When the Church Council presents the budget at the annual meeting, we have tried to determine how much our members will designate for Benevolence. This amount is then "pledged" to the Northern Great Lakes Synod and we pass on to them exactly what has been given. In the past, that amount has been about 10% of our total budget. Two years ago, we fell short of our pledge by about \$30.00. Last year we fell short by about \$600.00. The Council voted to use money from the Endowment Fund to make up the difference to meet our pledge.

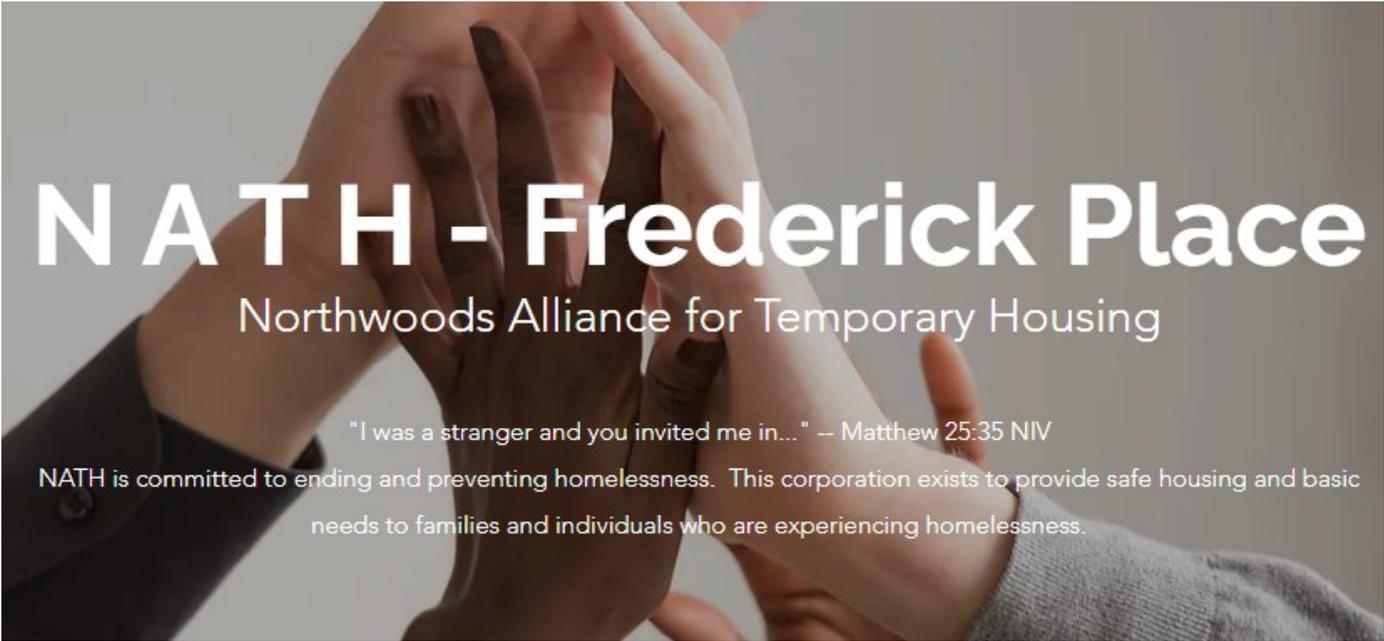
What does the Synod do with our benevolence contribution? In 2021 \$784,220 was given by our Synod's 79 congregations. \$464,000 of Congregational Mission Support was passed on to ELCA Churchwide . The ELCA proclaims Christ through hunger relief, missionary efforts, disaster relief, leader training, and providing educational resources just to name some of the ELCA's many impacts. \$160,000 was shared with partners in ministry such as seminaries, ELCA church related colleges, campus ministries, Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp and the Wisconsin Council of Churches. \$80,000 was used within our synod for specific congregational ministries, outreach and hunger ministries. \$395,000 was used for Office Operations, Personnel and Administration. The synod office has 4 full-time staff: Bishop Finegan, Assistant to the Bishop Jim Duehring, Office Administrator Heather Oysti and Bookkeeper/Secretary Betsy Koski. There are 2 other part time positions: a Synod Missioner and a Synod Youth Ministries Coordinator. They are just a phone call or email away to serve 79 congregations both administratively and pastorally.

The reason that I am sharing about all that is done with our Benevolence giving is to highlight the importance of those dollars to our communities and the world. The Stewardship Committee has determined that we are again going to fall short of our pledge to the Synod this year by close to \$2,000. We are finding that since we have moved forward with our roof project, giving has shifted from Benevolence to the Building Fund. Since our shortfall will be so large, we don't feel that it would be right to make up the difference from endowment. We want to honor where you have chosen to commit your donations.

In conclusion, we are very grateful for the generous giving of this congregation and we realize that following 3 years of covid and the inflation in our country, our families are finding it more and more difficult to make ends meet. We are especially thankful that we basically have enough money to pay for the roof project without having to borrow money. If you would like more specific information about "Mission Support" in our Synod I invite you to go to the website.

**....This is Stewardship!**

By JoAnne Barrix



# NATH - Frederick Place

Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing

"I was a stranger and you invited me in..." -- Matthew 25:35 NIV

NATH is committed to ending and preventing homelessness. This corporation exists to provide safe housing and basic needs to families and individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

## NATH WISH LIST

*Postage stamps  
Laundry Detergent  
Dryer Sheets  
Dishwasher Detergent  
13 and 30 Gallon Garbage Bags  
Toilet Bowl Cleaner  
All Purpose Cleaner  
Window Cleaner  
Comet  
Bleach  
Wash Cloths  
Swiffer Wet Pads  
Disposable Gloves—All Sizes  
Ziploc Bags—All Sizes*

*Household items are given to residents when they leave Frederick Place so they have to be replaced often.*

## NATH MEALS

Our ministry groups have been providing the monthly NATH (Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing) meals and this has been working well.

**All meals for 2023 have been covered—thank you!** Please consider signing your group up to provide a meal in 2024!

To volunteer, please sign-up on the sheet in the narthex or you can call Sue Larsen at 715-362-2544. Thank you for your cooperation in this ministry!

## NAMI Northern Lakes

Providing support, education and advocacy for people living with mental illness and their families in Forest, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. Monthly meetings: open to anyone; 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm. at First Methodist Church, Rhinelander. Northern Lakes Center located in Trinity Lutheran Church, Rhinelander.

**OUR HOURS ARE MONDAY TO FRIDAY 11:00 am TO 3:00 pm.**

Please call Linda at [715-420-1700](tel:715-420-1700) or e-mail at [northernlakescenter@gmail.com](mailto:northernlakescenter@gmail.com) if you are in need of anything.



# December 2023

Immanuel Lutheran Church 715-362-5910  
21 W Timber Drive, Rhinelander

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group  7:00 pm AA	<b>LEFSE AND BAKE SALE! Free coffee and samples at 9:00 am.</b>  Sale starts at 9:30 am.
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>9:00 am Worship Communion</b> 1st Sunday of Advent  Worship Leader: Rev. John Kuziej  10:00 am Faith Explorers	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <b>PASTOR JOHN OFFICE HOURS 10:00 am—NOON</b>  8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group	1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting  6:00 pm Confirmation Class	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <b>10:30 am—Noon MEMORY CAFÉ</b>	8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group  7:00 pm AA	<b>8:45 am— 11:30 am Food Pantry</b>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM</b>  2nd Sunday of Advent  Worship Leader: Matthew Johnson	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <b>PASTOR JOHN OFFICE HOURS 10:00 am—NOON</b>  8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group  5:00 pm Stewardship	<b>10:00 am WELCA Bible Study</b>  1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting  6:00 pm Council	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Newsletter Articles Due!!!</b></div>	8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group  7:00 pm AA	<b>THE TUESDAY MORNING CREW MEETS EVERY TUESDAY TO DO ODD JOBS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN OUR CHURCH. PLEASE REACH OUT TO JOHN PLAUTZ IF YOU ARE ABLE TO HELP! 715-367-3762 jeplautz@hotmail.com</b>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<b>9:00 am Worship Communion</b> 3rd Sunday of Advent  Worship Leader: Rev. Paul Heykes  10:00 am Faith Explorers	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <b>PASTOR JOHN Friendly Village Nursing Home Service</b>  8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group	1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting  4:30 pm Meal @ Frederick Place  <i>There is no confirmation class tonight.</i>	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>	8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group  7:00 pm AA	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<b>9:00 am Worship</b> 4th Sunday of Advent  Worship Leader: Rev. John Kuziej  10:00 am Faith Explorers  <b>4:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship</b>	<b>CHRIST IS BORN!</b>  <b>HAVE A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!</b>  7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	<b>OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON</b>  <b>PASTOR JOHN Rennes Nursing Home Service</b>  8:45—10:45 am Closed Support Group				
31						
<b>9:00 am Worship</b>  Worship Leader: Rev. John Kuziej  10:00 am Faith Explorers						

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

October 2023

### GENERAL FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$74,085.43
Offerings	\$13,051.10
\$2,315.10 is moved to building fund	
Expenses	(\$ 8,944.39)
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$78,192.14</b>

### BENEVOLENCE:

October Offering	\$ 1,268.79
2022 Pledge	\$19,000.00
YTD Remittance	\$14,432.27

### BUILDING FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$28,901.54
Offerings	\$ 2,315.10
Expenses	\$ 480.42
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$30,736.22</b>

INCOME exceeded the  
EXPENSES by \$4,106.71.

### October Attendance:

	In-person	Online	Total
10/01	46	41	87
10/08	30	48	78
10/15	47		
10/22	38		
10/29	43		

Our average worship attendance for the month of October will be published in the next newsletter. Online numbers were unavailable at press time.



<b>12/1</b>	Brooklyn Meyer	<b>12/17</b>	Harper Kral
<b>12/8</b>	Scott Schulz	<b>12/19</b>	Angeline Hoppe
<b>12/9</b>	Anita Foss-Nelson	<b>12/20</b>	Jaxon Meyer
<b>12/11</b>	Cindy Kuehn	<b>12/20</b>	Shirley Scholtes
<b>12/12</b>	Travis Drossart	<b>12/25</b>	Bryan Kral
<b>12/12</b>	Joseph Patrone	<b>12/25</b>	James Wood
<b>12/14</b>	Adam Schmitz	<b>12/27</b>	Dianne Syms
<b>12/14</b>	Nathan Schmitz	<b>12/28</b>	Mary Gregory
<b>12/15</b>	Jason Bierman		

<b>12/9</b>	Kellie & Joshua Kral
<b>12/15</b>	Ronald & Ruth Palm
<b>12/18</b>	Barbara & Gene Frane
<b>12/20</b>	Terri & Ronald Johnson
<b>12/22</b>	Edna & Duane Snyder
<b>12/30</b>	Karen & Daniel Stroede
<b>12/30</b>	Darlene Machtan & Homer Van Meter
<b>12/31</b>	Joanne & Bernie Dart

*May Your Day Be Special!*

If you were omitted or listed in error, please contact the church office at 715-362-5910. Thank you!

## IMMANUEL'S MESSENGER

21 West Timber Drive  
Rhineland, WI 54501

Electronic Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Rhineland, WI  
PERMIT NO. 194

---

**Join us for  
in-person worship  
Sundays at 9:00 am  
All are Welcome!**

**Or join online**

- 1) Through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYfWH9caWNuzOxf9T9JgecQ> (or search Immanuel Rhineland) on YouTube.
- 2) Through our website: [www.immanuelrhineland.org/worship](http://www.immanuelrhineland.org/worship) (you'll also find the bulletin and lessons here).
- 3) Through our phone app. Just click on the "worship" button at the bottom of the screen.

The live stream will begin at about 8:55.