

# Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church



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



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

## Message from Interim Pastor John Kuziej

You probably have noticed signs of Christmas in various stores as early as October. Have you noticed that advertisers talk about “Black Friday” as if it were every Friday? But do all the ploys to purchase presents and paraphernalia get you in the spirit of Christmas? Well, yes and no. It is nice to shop for loved ones. Now that is easy for me since I live alone and only have to shop for my dog. I know what he wants, a bag of “Pupperoni”, his favorite treat. Now I don’t mean to sound like a grinch and rob holiday joy but there is a downside to the whole gift giving challenge. Gifts can be expensive, and one can feel guilty either spending too much or not being able to afford a gift. Guilt does not enhance the spirit of Christmas.

Now some folks really spend a lot of time decorating for Christmas. Suddenly, all kinds of wreaths have appeared for sale outside stores. They are fresh and the evergreen smell is great but then look at the prices—they will cost you a lot of green! About now you will notice inflatable yard décor popping up. They can be funny, but I am glad no one has produced an inflatable nativity scene-or have they? And what would be Christmas without decorating a tree, or trees since some put lights on more than evergreens outside. It is wonderful to drive around at night and see the Christmas lights. The Christmas tree can be a wonderful family tradition, but what if you live alone. A friend of mine, a widower, lives alone and will not even put up a small Christmas tree. He told me his reason: no one ever comes around to visit and see it. This can cause us to think about the meaning of Christmas. Christmas is not to be a hassle, but deeply holy. Christmas holiness is not paying attention to sales-flyers but being moved by the attention of our gracious God who has come to this world in humble compassion.

I will share what has ignited the Christmas spirit in me: a story of a mother and her daughter fleeing their homeland and traveling to the United States. The mother made the crucial decision to leave Venezuela because an oppressive government riddled with corruption had made life hard and dangerous. At first the mom and daughter went to neighboring Chile but still could not find enough work to make ends meet. So, she sold all she could scrounge and left for the United States with about \$1500. The money would be spent on necessities plus the various fees charged by various entrepreneurs, honest or otherwise, taking advantage of the many migrants seeking a better life.

The trip would require a dangerous trek through inhospitable territory most notably what is called the Darien, a thick jungle through a portion of Panama. As mother and daughter set off, the little girl’s grandmother promised to pray for guardian angels along the way. As they were in the thick of the jungle, mother and daughter became separated, climbing a hill with the name “The Hill of Death”. It is hard to imagine a six-year-old alone in a jungle thicket of darkness with dangers all around. The little girl made it through the night by singing: “The glory of God, giant and sacred, carries me in his arms.”

A little girl lost in a place of stalking predators, and the worst could be the two-legged kind, swindlers, and kidnapers. But her grandmother had promised prayer, and an angel appeared. This angel was very human whose name happened to be ‘Angel’. This courageous man took the little girl under his wings and carried her over difficult terrain. Throughout the days and nights, he would console her and not leave her alone. Finally, when Angel and the girl made it through the jungle, they found rest at a government camp for migrants. At that camp mother and daughter were re-united. Mom had continued the journey with help from other angels, determined to find her precious daughter.

This story, for the time being, is an open one. When they reached the U.S. border, they were denied entry since they had no visa, or sponsor in the U.S. Mom and daughter ended up in a refugee camp in Honduras. Mother has no money and is waiting for family to raise the money needed to fly back to Venezuela. Migrants seeking asylum or a better life in the United States continues to be a contentious political problem. It is not unusual to hear unkind comments about suffering people seeking entry...they are de-humanized as a problem or demonized as drug dealers or other violent criminals.

You may ask what this story has to do with the Christmas spirit? For me the key is the song the little girl sang in the darkness of the jungle, “The glory of God, giant and sacred, He carries me in his arms.” I think of her song as a Christmas carol: the glory of God, giant and sacred, revealed in a manger in Bethlehem, a child born for us to carry us in his arms. God became a human being to find us when we are lost in the darkness, ever present to carry us with compassion and love. God became a human being in Jesus to love the world, declaring no one is a throw-away in the eyes of God. The Christmas spirit is the work of the Holy Spirit, leading us to the manger and the gift of Jesus whose glory is to carry us through life with mercy and steadfast love.



## **LEFSE AND BAKE SALE DECEMBER 3**

Thanks to the many lefse makers who have been hard at it for the last two weeks. Now it's time to crank up our home kitchens to prepare cookies, candies, pies, cakes, breads, jellies, soups—whatever your specialty—to augment the lefse at the December 3rd bake sale. Items can be dropped off Thursday, Dec. 1 from 9:00 am to noon and Friday, Dec. 2, from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. You are encouraged to plate and price your donations, but volunteers will do so if you prefer. Due to inflation, all items will increase by at least \$1. Doors will open at 9:00 am. Saturday with complimentary coffee and treats. Sales begin at 9:30 am and run until the goods are gone. Often that happens by 11:30 am, so plan to come early for best selection. Volunteers are needed for setup, takedown, and during the sale itself. Contact Dianne Syms for more information. All proceeds go to fund WELCA community projects in 2023.





*“May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*  
~Romans 15:5-6, Advent 2

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,  
As I write this, today is election day. I hear from some people that they are very anxious about this; anxious about outcomes, anxious about potential violence, anxious about accusations of voter fraud or refusals to accept results. And from others, it is business as usual as I believe, in many of our communities, people know who their election officials are. Neighbors are behind the desk at polling locations. Familiar faces are overseeing the voting booths. I'd like to think that we have a deeper sense of trust in voting procedures and processes where we live than perhaps in more urban areas.

Whether you trust the process in your community or not, I think we all know that we are at a place in the history of our country where the political seams are showing, and the fabric of society is even ripping apart in some places, leaving holes and frayed edges. We, as a country, are not “living in harmony with one another.”

Truthfully, I'm not sure that's possible. I still hope for civility, but I do not expect harmony. However, I do hope for harmony in our communities of faith, so that with one voice we can glorify God, and with joined effort, we can partner together in ministry.

I've heard from a few of our congregations that “people leave their politics at the door.” Certainly, our congregations are not the place for campaigning, but can they be a place of civil discourse? Not so that one person can badger another person into agreement, but so that as people of faith we can wrestle together with issues that are complex and multi-layered. Where else can people of faith struggle together with what it means to be people of faith, when opinions vary about what a faithful response is?

It seems to me that the polar opposite extremes of any given issue are the only voices at the microphone or on the news. I have no idea what the results of the midterm election will be, nor what that result will mean moving into the future. Since we are both citizens of the world and children of the kingdom of God, the way forward is far from clear. I hope that it is possible to discuss, discern, and consider together what it means to live in harmony given differing opinions about politics. And I offer a word of caution, that the extreme voice seeks to demonize the opposition, and no one is as bad, or as good, as any advertisement or media spot or Facebook post seeks to make them out to be.

It seems to me that the last decades have seen an eroding sense of trust in government, authority, and institutions, including the Church, including your church. I don't know how to build up trust in government, but your witness can help to rebuild trust in people of faith and what it means to be Christian.

I therefore ask you, encourage you, exhort you, to give witness in your community to your faith in Christ Jesus, not just in how you vote, but in how you treat each other, how you speak about those with whom you disagree, and how you live your faith in every day. While much of what Jesus said is not so clear, his actions and his call to follow could not be more explicit. Jesus gives us the mandate to love, to serve, to feed his sheep. We are to advocate for the forgotten, lift up the lowly, see the overlooked, welcome the excluded, love God by loving our neighbor. It is as easy and as difficult as that.

As congregations once again gather around tables for coffee fellowship and conversation, I hope we can renew friendships and deepen relationships, old and new, so that at least in our communities of faith we can find common ground and listen better to each other than the rest of the society seems to be able to manage. As siblings in Christ, as people bound together as Christ's own body, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13, Advent 2)

Yours in Christ,  
Bishop Katherine Finegan



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



Thank you to our Youth and Education group, headed by Becky Eades and Sarah Willoughby, for providing a chili dinner to NATH in October, It was enjoyed and appreciated very much. Our confirmation and senior youth and leaders who made the October Frederick Place meal as a service project are pictured above: (left to right) Sarah Willoughby, Zoey Kral, Callie Kress, Josh Willoughby, Tommy Eades and Becky Eades.

## Ecumenical Worship Service being Offered

Blue Christmas  
December 15th @ 7:00 pm  
at Calvary Baptist Church  
320 Lincoln Street



## 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  
Devon Vanden Heuvel for  
volunteering for December!



## Memory Cafe Volunteers Needed

We are still in need of Memory Cafe volunteers. Please consider this ministry and the role you might play in it. Northwood's Memory Cafe is a program Immanuel hosted and assisted in running, in partnership with local healthcare agencies and the Alzheimer's Association—Greater Wi Chapter, for several years before the COVID 19 Pandemic shut everything down. We're now at a point where this program can be offered once again, hopefully still at Immanuel.

The program would meet once a month from 10:30 am to Noon. Previously the cafe met the 1st Thursday of every month. Program participants include individuals experiencing early stage dementia, mild memory loss or cognitive impairment, accompanied by their care partners, family/friends. It is an opportunity for these individuals to socialize with those in similar circumstances, enjoy refreshments, games, music, and other fun.

To get this program off the ground once again, volunteers are needed. The level of commitment is up to each individual, **BUT MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK.** Volunteer responsibilities can range from choosing and presenting a topic (e.g. craft project, story presentation, sing-a-long) to attending the cafe and assisting with preparing refreshments or any other needed tasks. Sue Kirby was heavily involved in running the Memory Cafe previously and is willing to assist any volunteers in getting this program started once again. If anyone has questions and/or is interested in learning more about volunteering, please contact Sue Kirby at 715-490-2192.

## *Thank You for Serving*

*Thank you to Pastor John Kuziej, Matthew Johnson, Pastor Grant Van Lishout, and Karen Carter for filling pulpit supply as our search continues for our new pastor.*

*Thank you to Dianne Syms for all you do for ACES.*

*Thank you to Jackie Waldorf for coordinating the November blood drive.*

*Thank you to Joanne O'Brien for filling our bulletin board with pictures of our members active in our community.*

*Thank you to all our lefse bakers!*

*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....**

Thank you for all your prayers, sympathy cards, phone calls, and caring thoughts, during and after the passing of our dear husband and brother, Tom Duffy. It was a very difficult time and it meant so much to both of us to know our friends and church family cared about us and our families. Special thank you to Pastor John for his care and support.

Julianne Duffy and Joanne O'Brien

### **With appreciation....**

I would like to thank all those people who have sent me cards, called, or visited me during this past year. A special thank you to Pastor Tammy and Pastor John. I enjoyed our visits and receiving communion. I have been here at Rennes for over a year now and I do miss my church family and other family and friends but I am grateful to have a nice facility such as this to live in. Thank you all again and God's blessings to all.

Kate Bessey

Mavis Perry is very happy to be moving closer to her daughter, Barb. As of Tuesday, November 8, 2022. Mavis' new address is: Mavis Perry, 429 W Wayne St. Apt. 125, Ellsworth, WI 54012 She would love to hear from you.

### **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)

# COMMUNITY HOLIDAY CONCERT

Sunday, December 11, 2022 at 2:00 pm

Nicolet College Theater

Talented musicians from area groups join forces again to bring you this annual holiday tradition. Your seasonal favorites will be performed by the Rhinelander Area Community Band, Lakeland Barber Shop, Northwoods Choraliers, Rhinelander Male Chorus, and the Hymns and Hysr.

FREE Admission. Complimentary cookies and coffee will be provided during the concert. Non-perishable food and monetary donations for local food pantries are welcome at the door.



## POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

We will be decorating the church with poinsettias for the Christmas Season. If you would like to donate one or more poinsettias to beautify the sanctuary for this festive season, please fill out the form below and return it to the church by December 11th. You can return the form by mail or simply place it in the offering plate in an envelope with your check enclosed. The cost of poinsettias this year for 4<sup>1/2</sup>" pot Pixie is \$7.50 and \$16.25 for 6<sup>1/2</sup>" plant. You may select the color you wish, if no color is chosen we will order red.



Please circle one:

*Red*    *White*    *Pink*

*Pixie \$7.50*

*Medium \$16.25*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*In Memory of:* \_\_\_\_\_

*In Honor of:* \_\_\_\_\_

## Patience, and Praying, for our Call

*By Cory Dellenbach, Call Committee Chair*

Times of transition are never easy, and we're in a pretty big transition right now as we search for our new pastor. Thankfully we have a great group of guest worship leaders, including Pastor John, to lead us until that time comes.

Last time we had to look for a new pastor it took us just a little over two years before Pastor Tammy found her way to us. There is no telling how long this time will take ... it could be in a week, or truth be told, it could be two-plus years again, no one knows.

That's where patience and praying need to come in from the congregation. As much as we would like to, we can't rush this process. We all need to have patience and let the process work, and we all need to pray that the right person will see our ministry site profile.

Bishop Finegan and Assistant to the Bishop Jim Duehring are also keeping their eyes open for the right candidate for Immanuel.

I was curious and decided to see what we're up against. It is a little surprising and eye-opening. If you go to the ELCA's website and click on "Call Process" in the upper right of the website, you can find your way to a link for current openings in the ELCA (<https://www.elca.org/Call-Process/Current-Openings>).

In the search option, just put in Wisconsin for the state, and at the bottom select "solo pastor." After all, that is what we are seeking. There are currently 40 openings, just in Wisconsin alone. When you don't select the state and search just for "solo pastor," there are 406 openings throughout the ELCA. Crazy.

What does that tell me? It tells me we could be in for a bit of a wait, and it also tells me that if you are looking for a career with plenty of location options ... ministry should be your calling!

Peace to all of you, and continue with your prayers and patience; they are both truly appreciated. If you have any questions about the call process, don't hesitate to reach out to me or any other call committee member (JoAnne Barrix, Brian Willoughby, Kevin Kirby, Kristine Mladucky, Kathy Maule and our youth representative Isaiah Willoughby). My cell number is 715- 304-9978, and my email address is [corydellenbach@gmail.com](mailto:corydellenbach@gmail.com)

**SHEETS NEEDED**—Our quilters work the majority of the year to make quilts to be sent overseas to help keep others warm. Do you have any sheets that you would be willing to donate to them? If you do, please drop them off in the quilting room downstairs. Thank you for your help!



## A Few Days in Nebraska with Fellow Youth

By Johanna Dellenbach

In November I was contacted by the Northern Great Lakes Synod's youth coordinator Stefanie Ehle about representing the synod at the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit in Ashland, Nebraska, along with a youth and a leader from Negaunee, Michigan.

Of course, I said I would be willing to go. I was a little nervous, but more excited about the trip. Going somewhere new for the first time on an airplane without my parents.

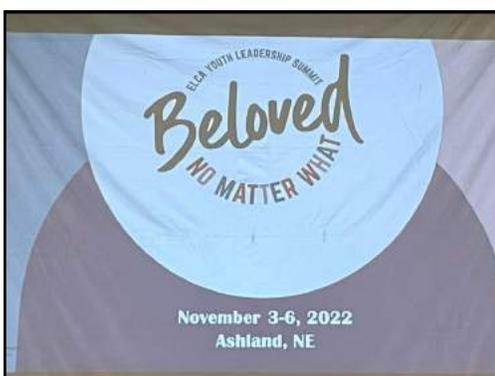
We left for Nebraska on Thursday, November 3 at 6:00 am. from the airport in Green Bay and got to the camp in Ashland that afternoon.

We had a big worship service on our first and last day where we would sing, go through lessons, have sermons and communion. Every night before bed we would have devotion with our family groups — which were the people that came from synods around us.

Everyday we would have peer ministry where adults would go and do their own thing and the youth would stay and we would learn about different stories in the Bible and learn to get better at talking to each other, with open and closed questions.

A few times a day we would hear about people's faith formation stories. They would tell people about stuff that happened to them that ended up bringing them closer to God and strengthening their faith. The last night there we had candle time, which is where we got to go to different stations and learn to pray in different ways.

It was a great experience and I would love to go again and I think more people need to know about it since most of the people I met there didn't know what the ELCA Youth Leadership Summit was until they were told they were going to it.



I think it was a huge learning experience. I learned a lot about my faith and I also learned how so many things are different in different areas of the United States — especially with schools. It was an amazing experience and I just want more youth and adults to know more about the summit and the opportunities it can give you.

I would like to thank the Northern Great Lakes Synod and the youth team for asking me to go and also Immanuel in Rhinelander for praying and supporting me, not only during this trip but for many other opportunities I've had and will have.

# IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting Minutes: October 12, 2022

Council Members Present: President: Darlene Machtan, Vice-President: Becky Eades, Secretary: JoAnne Barrix, Glenn Johnson, Tina Schmitz, Deb Rinka, Charlie Strong, Keith Snyder, Pastor John Kuziej.

## Opening

Darlene opened the in person meeting at 5:59 pm.

Devotion by Deb: Colossians 2:7 – Thank God even in trying times

**Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Approved the minutes from the September 14, 2022 council meeting with 2 abstentions.

**Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Approved the minutes from the September 25, 2022 special congregational meeting with 2 abstentions.

**Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**Approved the minutes from the September 25, 2022 special council meeting with 3 abstentions.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor John expressed thanks for the pastor appreciation gift. He has been visiting shut-ins, and will be moving forward with nursing home services. The first will be at Friendly Village on November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 am.

**Long-Term Items:** ( Great Commission Schedule and Constitution article C12.04)

- 1.** Witness: Sharing the Gospel (3xyear) The ecumenical music fest on October 9<sup>th</sup> was excellent. Over \$2100.00 was collected so that was \$700.00 for each of the three ministries: Boys and Girls Club, NAMI and Tri-County Lily's House Domestic Violence Shelter. Pictures were submitted for God's Work, Our Hands Sunday and the Food Pantry Crew has been faithful.
- 2.** Administer and oversee financial affairs and budget (quarterly): General Fund giving has been a little down in the past month, however, benevolence giving has been generous. Stewardship will begin working on the budget for 2023 next month.
- 3.** Staff: Evaluate, support and maintain relationships between staff (semi-annually): Kari and Sheree are doing a great job especially with a pastoral vacancy. Kari will be very busy with Stewardship materials and mailing and then Advent and Christmas services and then the annual report.

## **Short-Term Items:**

### **Old Business:**

- 1.** Paintings, bell, floor cleaner, chairs: We are waiting on information about our floor cleaner. We have found even more folding chairs. We will ask Cory to post on Facebook Marketplace for \$1.00 per chair. We are still working on the bell.
- 2.** Memory Cafe: No progress on finding volunteers. We will put a request in the next newsletter.
- 3.** Bats: We have seen no further presence. When Brian and John install the heat tape they will check for areas in the roof that could be access points and close them up.
- 4.** Call Committee Progress: The Ministry Site Profile has been completed and sent to the Synod Office. They reviewed it and asked for clarification on a few items. We have responded to their questions.
- 5.** Joyful Song Ecumenical Music Fest: Excellent! Immanuel was represented by a small group and was the lead off act. There is a great deal of talent in our area.
- 6.** Heat Tape: The tape is here and needs to be installed.

### **New Business:**

- 1.** Stewardship Sunday: We will have Stewardship Sunday on October 30<sup>th</sup>. Bishop Finegan will be leading worship with communion. The Band and Choir will provide music and a mission interpreter will speak on the use of our benevolence offering. There will be a brunch provided by the Stewardship and Outreach committees. The Council will again send Thank-You notes to members of the congregation.
- 2.** Pastor Compensation Package: The Call Committee has discussed this. The final compensation will be negotiated with the Synod and the candidate and approved by the congregation.

3. Bake Sale/Lefse: Diane Symms and Kathy Maule are coordinating this event. Lefse making will take place the first 2 weeks of November. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex.
4. Disposal of old sound equipment: Stewardship is determining the best way to take care of this issue.
5. Blood Drive: Jackie Waldorf is coordinating this and it is planned for November.
6. Committee Budget updates: The chairpersons will be notified that the Stewardship Committee is going to be working on a budget for next year and will need information on any major changes.
7. All Saints, Thanksgiving Eve, Blue Christmas and Christmas Services: For All Saints, we will have candles to light and speak the names of those we wish to remember. Thanksgiving Eve will be at UCC. There will be a combined choir. Mother Meredith is organizing the Blue Christmas Service and will be tentatively planned for December 14<sup>th</sup>. Christmas Eve services will be at 4:30 and 6:30 pm. They will be candlelight services and Pastor John will lead worship. Christmas Day is on a Sunday and we will have a 9:00 am. Service. This will be led by either Karen Carter or Pastor John.

**Comments/Discussion Committee actions:**

There is a music ministry of ukulele players that meet at Trinity. Is there a ministry that Immanuel could sponsor, music or otherwise? Think about some ideas.

**Adjournment: Action – Motion/Second/Carried...**The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm. following the closing prayer.

**Closing Prayer:** read by Deb

Respectfully Submitted,  
JoAnne Barrix, Council Secretary

## **Welcome Our New Member!**

Crystal Barnard joined Immanuel on Sunday, November 6th. Crystal was born and raised in Door County. She has three brothers. She graduated from Stout University in Menomonie, WI in 1965. She taught high school in Los Angeles. She received her MS from Stout in 1968. Crystal was the Administrator of Women's programs at Moraine Park Technical District. She married in 1971 and divorced in 2020. She worked on the farm and off the farm.



Crystal has three children: Susan, who works in the Green Bay Public Schools and Barnard Farm. Daniel, who is a Refugee Camp Administrator and Carmen, who is a National Park Ranger in the Great Smokey Mountains. She has four grandchildren: Rodger, Katherine, Rose and Elaina.

Crystal received her MA from Marion University in Fond du Lac in 1993 in Educational Leadership. She served for twelve years as a missionary in Central America in Christian schools. She was two years in El Salvador, four years in Belize, and 6 years in Honduras. She has since retired.

Crystal met Richard Laddusire and moved to Rhinelander. She is already active in quilting, lefse making, and providing coffee treats on Sunday mornings! Please welcome Crystal to Immanuel!

# Helping To Build A Hunger-Free Community



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.



The Weekend Food For Kids Program is a project of the Rhinelander Area Food Pantry and the School District of Rhinelander. What happens when kids go home for the weekend and face empty cupboards? The Rhinelander Area Food Pantry and the School district of Rhinelander have partnered to create the Weekend Food for Kids Program to ensure that no child goes home hungry.

This program is currently serving over 200 children in the Rhinelander School District. Bags of food are distributed to the students each Friday. Food being distributed is intended to be nutritious, delicious and simple for a child to prepare in case an adult is not available to do so. The cost is approximately \$7.60 per child per week. If you would like to sign up, contact your student's school counselor for more information.

If you would like to donate to this worthwhile program, see the Giving Tree for envelopes!

## **EQUITY CHALLENGE NOW IS THE TIME: PREPARING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF BABY JESUS**

When in prison, John sent his disciples to ask Jesus if he is the Messiah. Jesus reminds them of all the restorative things he has done: the blind see, lepers are cured, good news is preached, etc. To the crowd, Jesus then says: *"What did you go to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?...A man dressed in fine clothes?...A prophet?...Yes, I tell you, more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you."* Matt.11:2-10. In preparing the day we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we look to the man he became and what he had to teach us. Here are some resources to help us increase our understanding of ourselves, others, and our faith.

### **Awkward Holiday Conversations**

**Thursday, Dec. 15 from 6:30 to 7:45 pm, Online @ [Wichurches.org](http://Wichurches.org) under tab Events.**

You're all in the kitchen, catching up, nibbling in advance of the Thanksgiving meal when, whammo, one of your relatives makes a politically charged statement that you know not everyone in the room agrees with. The statement has the potential to sink the meal and cause rifts among family members. How do you respond? The politics of our time have pulled Christians of all stripes into adversarial relationships. Instead of living as beloved children of God, seeking to love our neighbors, we have believed the lie that the only way to discuss politics is to win the argument and demonize the other side. The alternative is to avoid it altogether, and sadly, many do. But both approaches leave us wanting and do nothing to create a more just world. Come to this workshop to practice having conversations in a way that reflects both the kindness and the courage of Jesus.

### **Resetting the Table**

**December 7 & 8, 2:00-4:30 pm, online @ [Wichurches.org](http://Wichurches.org) under the tab Events**

Differences surrounding moral and social issues have created frictions and challenges for many faith communities and leaders. Resetting the Table's sought-after workshop equips religious leaders with tools to support faith communities to listen and speak across differences with honesty, dignity, and grace. The program provides participants with road-tested exercises they can bring back to their own institutions as well as a chance to experience and model rich dialogue across differences among participating faith leaders.

### **Daily Advent Devotional Study:**

**<https://advent-yearningforawakening.weebly.com>**

Yearning for an Awakening of our minds and souls to the biases developed over a lifetime. When we acknowledge them, we can work to change them. Offered by our NGLS, one hour cohorts are on Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays beginning on Nov. 27.

### **Online resources:**

**[nglsynod.org](http://nglsynod.org) daily devotions, Nov. 6, 2022 by Pastor Molly Ingersoll, Messiah, Marquette.**

Compare what is happening in our world today with the Sunday lectionary readings in Advent. Now: war, natural disasters, political turmoil in our country and around the world Preparing for Christmas Day can be a challenge. Finding a gift with limited quantities available leads to a frantic search. Spending on gifts added to winter heating costs can create financial stress. Christmas without beloved family members from death, distance, or differing beliefs is painful. Declining abilities may make a "Merry Christmas" hard. There are wars in the world, fires and floods, and political turmoil in our country and around the world. Amidst all these things, how do we prepare for Jesus' arrival? Where do we look for him? What images do we see in our church? What is he doing? What color is he? Let's pray: Gracious God, the gospels help us to see you at work in the world. We thank you for your Word, even when it is scary or ominous. Help us to see both the good and that which causes suffering in our world. Let us know that no matter what, you are here, and you are active in our time, just as you were 2,000 years ago. Help us to see you at work as we place ourselves in the gospels and try to be better hearers of your Word. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

How do we prepare for Jesus' coming ?

Submitted by Susan Anderson

## Did You Know?....

*Will you come and follow me?*

The theme of our Stewardship Sunday asked many to come and follow... and they did. The Stewardship Committee started planning a few months before October 30<sup>th</sup>. We joined forces with the Outreach Committee and planned the food. The Stewardship mailings were prepared. The kitchen was cleaned after years of little use. The Band practiced. The Choir practiced. Egg dishes were prepared. Muffins and breads were baked. Fruit and apple crisp was readied. We heard a temple talk from our “Mission Interpreter” and the worship service was led by our Bishop. The people came. *This is stewardship!*

*Will you come and follow me?*

Volunteers, both experienced and new, gathered four days in the last couple of weeks to make lefse. The fellowship, cooperation and fun even out-shined the finished product. The WELCA bake sale is on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Many will bake, organize and work the sale. The people will come. We had our second Saturday volunteers at the Food Pantry. Many people helped. *This is stewardship!*

*Will you come and follow me?*

Preparations are being made for Thanksgiving Eve, Advent Worship, Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve and Christmas day. Many people will be involved with planning, decorating, singing and playing music, preparing the Children's Christmas program, reading, ushering... *This is stewardship!*

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

by JoAnne Barrix

P.S. Please don't forget to return your estimate of giving and time and talent forms. Come and share your gifts.

### **WORD OF THE MONTH— IMMANUEL**

“Immanuel”

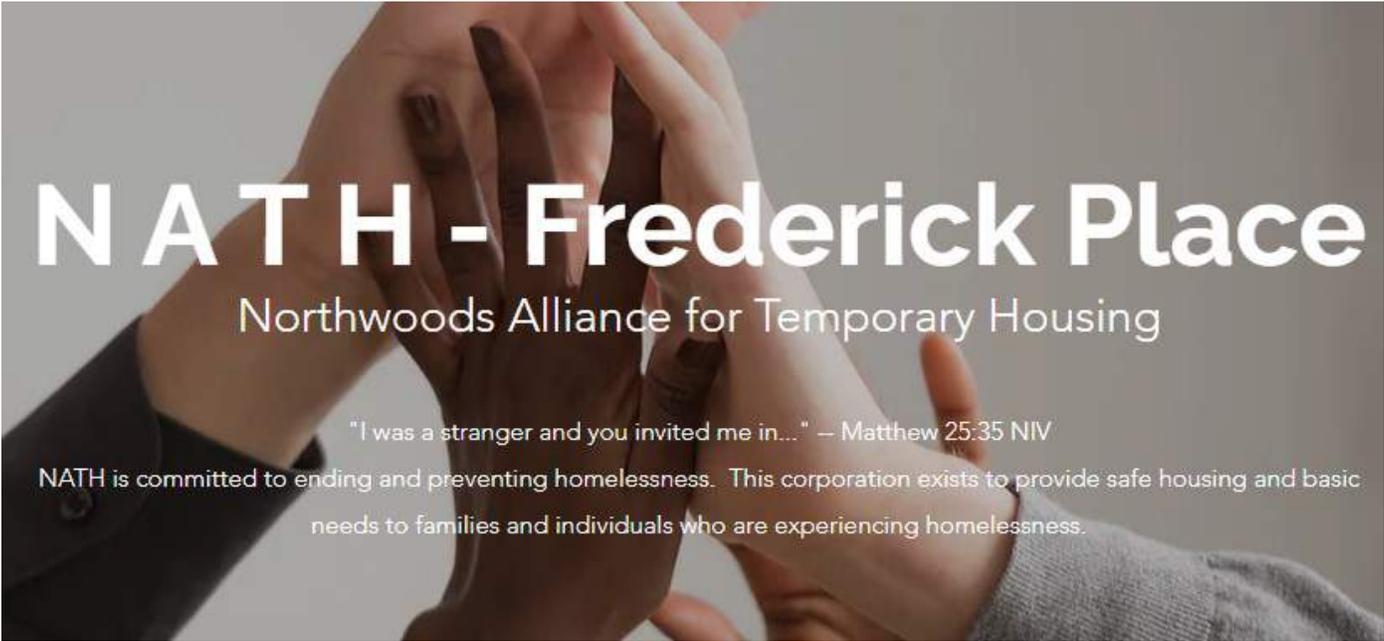
the child whose birth was foretold by Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14) and who in Christian tradition is identified with Jesus

[from Hebrew `immānū'el, literally: God with us]

the name of the Messiah as prophesied by Isaiah

As seen in Matthew 1:23, the meaning of Immanuel is “God with us. The promised child received the name of Jesus, but he was also Immanuel, God in the flesh. God became human so that we would know and understand him, through Jesus.

Jesus fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy because He was literally “God with us”; He was fully human but still fully God. Matthew recognized Jesus as Immanuel, the living expression of the Incarnation: the miracle of the Son of God who became human and who made his home among us in order to reveal God to us.



# 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

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

1. Toilet Paper
2. Paper Towel
3. AA Batteries
4. STICK-EM Mouse Traps
5. Air Freshener
6. Dishwasher Rinse Aids
7. 30 Gallon Garbage Bags
8. #10 Peel and Seal Envelope
9. Paper Plates
10. Ibuprofen

## 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 have been covered through February 2023. Please consider signing your group up to provide a meal again next year!

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 2022

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
				OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON		9:00 am LEFSE AND BAKE SALE
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00 am Worship Communion Choir Practice to follow Worship Leader: Rev. John Kuziej	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON  PASTOR JOHN OFFICE HOURS 10:00 am —NOON	1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON		8:45 am— 11:30 am Food Pantry
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:00 am Worship Communion Choir Practice to follow Worship Leader: Rev. Grant Van Lishout	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON  PASTOR JOHN OFFICE HOURS 10:00 am —NOON  5:00 pm Stewardship	10:00 am WELCA Bible Study Mocha on the Mount—All are welcome!  1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting  6:00 pm Council  6:00 pm-7:00 pm Confirmation Class	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Newsletter Articles Due!!!</div>		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:00 am Worship Choir Practice to follow Worship Leader: Matthew Johnson	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON  PASTOR JOHN OFFICE HOURS 10:00 am —NOON	1:00 pm— 3:00 pm Quilting  4:30 pm Meal @ Frederick Place	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON		CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP COMMUNION 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm Worship Leader: Rev. John Kuziej
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9:00 am CHRISTMAS DAY Worship Choir Practice to follow Worship Leader: Karen Carter	7:00 pm AA & Al-Anon	OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON  PASTOR JOHN 10:00 am Friendly Village Nursing Home Service		OFFICE HOURS 9:00 am—NOON		

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

October 2022

### GENERAL FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$27,215.92
Offerings	\$15,513.57
Expenses	(\$ 8,082.93)
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$34,646.56</b>

### BENEVOLENCE:

October Offering	\$ 1,905.00
2022 Pledge	\$19,000.00
YTD Remittance	\$15,122.90

### BUILDING FUND:

Beginning Balance	\$40,107.25
Offerings	\$ 1,604.89
Expenses	\$ 0.00
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$41,712.14</b>

INCOME exceeded the  
EXPENSES by \$7,430.64.



<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		

## October Attendance:

	In-person	Online	Total
10/2	42	45	87
10/9	24	29	53
10/16	40	67	107
10/23	30	49	79
10/30	47	58	105

Our average worship attendance for the month of October was 86.



<b>12/2</b>	Tom & Dee Montgomery
<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

**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight  
Communion  
Worship  
Saturday,  
December 24  
4:30 & 6:30 pm**



**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.