

## Immanuel Lutheran Church December 2025 Newsletter

*If you were at Immanuel on November 23, parts of this article may sound familiar to you.*

The twelve days of the Christmas season begin at sundown on December 24 and end at sundown on January 5. The Advent season begins on the fourth Sunday before December 25, or the Sunday closest to the festival of St. Andrew (November 30). Advent is a season of preparation for meeting and greeting the Lord Jesus when he comes: 1) as the baby in the manger; 2) in Word and Sacrament; and 3) at the end of time to judge the living and the dead.

This Advent season, our midweek services, Sunday Bible studies, and devotion books have the theme “Every Heart Prepare.” This theme comes from the following hymn stanza: “Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes, the Savior promised long; let **every heart prepare** a throne and every voice a song” (LSB 349:1). I encourage you to use these opportunities to prepare your hearts for our Savior’s coming. At the same time, consider those around you.

Christmas is a good time to invite people to church, whether for the first time ever or for the first time in a while. Lifeway Research recently shared a study of U. S. adults who don’t typically attend church which found that 56% of them said they were likely to attend church at Christmastime *if someone they know invited them*. What a wonderful opportunity for you to invite someone to join us at worship this Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, to be with Jesus.

It’s appropriate that St. Andrew’s Day helps determine the start of the Advent season, since he provides an example of inviting people to meet Jesus or bringing people to where Jesus is, things which Christians can do year-round but especially at this time of year. There are two noteworthy incidents, both in the Gospel according to St. John, involving St. Andrew. I encourage you to find them in your Bible and read them: John 1:35-42a and 12:20-22.

In the first incident, John the Baptist points out Jesus as the Lamb of God, so two men who have been following John begin following Jesus. One is Andrew; the other is anonymous. After spending that day with Jesus, Andrew finds his brother (Simon Peter) and tells him, “We have found the Messiah” (the Christ), and he simply brings his brother to Jesus. Who among your family or friends can you invite to church this Christmas? Who needs to meet Jesus?

In the second incident, much later, some Greeks approached Philip (who like Andrew was one of the Twelve) and said, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus,” so Philip went and told Andrew, and Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. These Greeks remind us of people who are unlike us somehow, people who are unfamiliar to us. How can you assist such people as they seek Jesus? Telling Jesus about them in your prayers is one way. Can you think of any other ways?

How can you follow St. Andrew’s example during this Advent season? His actions and words are so simple! You know where to find Jesus: in his Word and Sacraments, whenever we gather at church. Know the service times and ask someone to join you. Offer to pick them up, to sit with them, or to answer any questions they may have. Help someone meet Jesus.

# IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH DECEMBER 2025 CALENDAR

Monday, December 1 <sup>st</sup>	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis 7:00 p.m. – Elders Meeting
Wednesday, December 3 <sup>th</sup>	12:15 p.m. – Chapel – Pastor Wood 7:00 p.m. – Advent Vespers Service 7:30 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, December 6 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Christmas Stroll 5:30 p.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion 11:30 a.m. – LWML Christmas Lunch at Bunkers
Monday, December 8 <sup>th</sup>	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
Tuesday, December 9 <sup>th</sup>	6:30 p.m. – Board for Parochial Education Meeting
Wednesday, December 10 <sup>th</sup>	8:15 a.m. – Chapel – Pastor d'Entremont with special guests Daniel & Marie Lowitz, will be missionaries to the Dominican Republic 7:00 p.m. – Advent Vespers Service 7:30 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal
Thursday, December 11 <sup>th</sup>	6:30 p.m. ILS Christmas Program at Community Club
Saturday, December 13 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 p.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday, December 14 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion
Monday, December 15 <sup>th</sup>	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis 7:30 p.m. – Men's Club Meeting
Wednesday, December 17 <sup>th</sup>	12:15 p.m. – Chapel – Pastor Wood 7:00 p.m. – Advent Vespers Service 7:30 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, December 20 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 p.m. – Worship Service
Sunday, December 21 <sup>st</sup>	9:00 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Class 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
Monday, December 22 <sup>nd</sup>	6:45 a.m. – Public Catechesis
Monday, December 22 <sup>nd</sup> – January 2 <sup>nd</sup>	School Christmas Break
Wednesday, December 24 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 p.m. – Pre-service Music 6:00 p.m. – Sunday School Christmas Eve Service
Thursday, December 25 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 a.m. – Christmas Day service with Holy Communion
Saturday, December 27 <sup>th</sup>	5:30 p.m. – Worship Service
Sunday, December 28 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 a.m. – Bible Class (No Sunday School) 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service



## From the Principal's Desk

Comfort. What does this word mean to you? Is it the comfort of your favorite pajamas, your favorite food, or just the comfort of your own home? Comfort for me might be all of these things, probably even at the same time, but comfort is also something I am not great at achieving. I am the type of person who finds comfort in knowing everyone else is comfortable. I am used to doing things outside of my box if it means making others comfortable. For example I stepped out of my comfort zone to be principal this year, because I knew this school needed stability and it would cause comfort for everyone else. As I was interviewed, I was asked the question: what are your plans to grow our enrollment? That question wasn't entirely difficult at the time because it is a topic always on my mind, even as a teacher. So, I shared some thoughts, what now seem like a laundry list of unobtainable ideas. I was just asked this same question again, a week ago, my response changed. A lot more comfortable, I replied, with patience and with the key phrase, "Rome wasn't built in a day".

A few months ago, my perspective was all wrong. For the last 10 years, I thought it was something concrete, something we were not doing. This is not true, we are innovative, we have very passionate teachers who are always trying new things: At the beginning of the year, we chose to implement Spanish PreK-8. Was it comfortable, no, however 3 year old preschoolers can now recite the color green as 'verde' and can greet you with 'hola'. The 1st and 2nd graders can recite a whole prayer in Spanish. The 5th-8th grade students know their whole spanish alphabet and are starting their numbers after Thanksgiving.

What changed? Listening.

Listening to those around me, listening to my heart, and most importantly listening to what God is telling me. I thought all my ideas needed to be thrown into a hat and one by one pulled out and at the same time getting the buy-in from all stakeholders. Nope.

Immanuel Night, which was a great event that established us as ONE campus-a church, a school, and a daycare working for one purpose, taught me a lot of history about our campus. It taught me that by God's grace this school was built and I believe that by God's grace this school will still be here tomorrow.

So I ask, are you comfortable with that? Because I want you to be.

Our doors are open, what can we do for you? What would you like to see this school achieve?

I fully understood God, telling me to be patient and I didn't know it at the time. When I was filling out the enrollment numbers for my first board meeting agenda, I said to myself, quietly in my office, "wouldn't it be something if each month I could add one student to this enrollment total?!"

So far between September and November, I have been able to add 3 students to our enrollment. This is nothing other than a blessing. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort." 2 Corinthians 1:3 God provided this comfort for us all, believe in it.

As a thank you, I want to invite you to special days in December, Community Conferences with Mrs. Borrenpohl. On Fridays, December 5th and 12th from 1:10-3:00pm, I want to conference with you. Maybe it involves walking the halls with me, seeing what we're learning or just sitting in conversation, whatever it is, let's get comfortable! So for these two days, I will be free to the stakeholders to learn what their vision might be for our school. Can't come in, I can come to you. Please call the office and schedule a time with Leigh Ann. I look forward to meeting with you!

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to the following who have birthdays in December! Please call the church office if your name has been unintentionally omitted, or a date is incorrect.

2. Heather Heidel, Lois Obermeier
3. Emmerson Hasheider
5. Dennis A. Eggemann, Evelyn Kurtz, Barbara Croessman
7. Christine Bening
9. Karen Brockmann, Carol Wennemann
11. Keith Schuessler, Lily Gass, Andrew Perrine
12. Norman Martens
13. Michael Jacobs, Madisyn Rennegarbe, Bob Schwankhaus, Steve Weeke
14. Crystal Strasburg
16. Darren Eggemann
17. John Elliott, Aaron Schuetz, William Horvath
18. Ryerson Kramper
19. Stanley Schwankhaus
20. Tara Harre
21. Julie Weeke
22. Carolyn Rennegarbe, Malinda Weeke
23. Lois Rabenort, Pamela Strasburg
24. Sophia Wood
26. Alex Rossel
28. Paisley Heyde
30. Melanie Borrenpohl, Dennis Maschhoff, Jane Hasheider, Charlotte Durham

## ORGANISTS/PIANISTS

Wednesday, December 3rd – Sharon Krueger  
Saturday, December 6th – Sophia Wood  
Sunday, December 7th – Sharon Krueger  
Wednesday, December 10th – Sharon Krueger  
Saturday, December 13th – Sophia Wood  
Sunday, December 14th – Eric Wood  
Wednesday, December 17th – Sharon Krueger  
Saturday, December 20th Sophia Wood  
Sunday, December 21st – Sharon Krueger  
Wednesday, December 24th – Sharon Krueger  
Thursday, December 25th – Sharon Krueger  
Saturday, December 27th – Sophia Wood  
Sunday, December 28th – Sharon Krueger

## VISITATION COMMITTEE

Adeline Blumhorst

## ALTAR COMMITTEE

Charlotte Durham and Sharon Storck

## ACOLYTES

Wednesday, December 3rd – Hudson Schneider  
Saturday, December 6th – Landon Elliott  
Sunday, December 7th – Devin Hundelt  
Wednesday, December 10th – Maylen Kramper  
Saturday, December 13th – Collins Schumacher  
Sunday, December 14th – Sadie Bergmann  
Wednesday, December 17th – Markus Lautenschlaeger  
Saturday, December 20th – Coleson Hasheider  
Sunday, December 21st – Maylen Kramper  
Wednesday, December 24th – Devin Hundelt  
Thursday, December 25th – Hudson Schneider  
Crucifier – Landon Elliott  
Saturday, December 27th – Sadie Bergmann  
Sunday, December 28th – Collins Schumacher

## COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

Saturday, December 6th – Kent Helbig  
Sunday, December 7th – Johnathan Schneider  
Saturday, December 20th – Kent Helbig  
Sunday, December 21st – Mike Jacobs  
Thursday, December 25th – Dennis Prueshner

## USHERS

Saturday –  
Sunday – Mark Schneider and Dennis Pruehsner

## WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES IN DECEMBER

December 2nd – Glen and Deb Guest  
Scott and Allison Dunn  
December 21st – Eric and Brandi Bruck,  
Jeff and Kristal Jacobs  
December 22nd – Greg and Tara Harre

## Every Heart Prepare

### Overview of the Sermon Series

We decorate in preparation for Christmas. In November and December, people spend hours putting up lights in their living space and ornaments on their evergreens. Poinsettias are placed on the mantel, presents are put under the tree, and we “deck the halls with boughs of holly.” These Christmas decorations bring enjoyment and anticipation to the holiday.

Advent is the church’s season of preparation for Christmas, for the coming of the Lord. This Advent season, as part of our preparation, we will reflect upon three common Christmas decorations and how they help us see Christ and prepare for His coming: evergreens, lights, and the creche. Then, on Christmas, we will focus on the wrapped presents, which point us to the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Children will start practicing for the Christmas Eve Service on November 30<sup>th</sup> during Sunday School time. Practice will continue on Sundays during December.

## LWML NEWS

The LWML Christmas lunch will be held at Bunker's on Sunday, December 7 at 11:30am. All women of the congregation and their families are welcome to join us. If you would like to join us, please contact Emily Wood by December 3. You can call or text her at 618-713-0953.

**Poinsettia time is here.** This year, Poinsettias may be ordered in red, white, or multicolored(red/white). The price is \$8.75 each. Please let Lois Obermeier know by December 7<sup>th</sup> at 618-977-5956, as white and multicolored are limited. Thanks in advance.

## CHRISTMAS STROLL

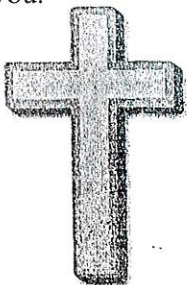
**Christmas Stroll** sign-up sheets are in the narthex. Thank you, in advance for supporting this event which takes place Saturday, December 6. This is the 21<sup>st</sup> year that Immanuel has hosted some Stroll activities! The Alumni and Friends Board organize several areas and the Board is a small group. Any and all volunteer help, soups and desserts will be appreciated! Jerry Brockmeier will have an art exhibit and will have a raffle for a lovely winter scene painting to support the Wee Care and Addieville Food Panty.

## ATTENTION OUT-GOING OFFICERS

All outgoing officers are asked to find a replacement for your position. If you need assistance, please contact chairman Jeff Jacobs.

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

**The offering envelopes** are new and different this year. Each envelope still has their own number. Please fill out the date and mark which category that you want your offering to go towards. Example: Home Use ☐, Current ☐, Other \_\_\_\_\_, can be anything that you want. Examples of Other \_\_\_\_\_: Advent, Lent, Cemetery, Building Fund, etc. If you or a family member did not receive your envelopes, please let Malinda Weeke know. If you have any question, please call Malinda at 618-713-5008. Thank you.



Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Okawville, Illinois

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Home Use ☐ Current ☐

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## GERMAN SERVICE

**German Christmas Service:** St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Covington, will host a German Christmas service (*Der Weihnachtsgottesdienst*) on Sunday, December 14, 2025, at 2:00 p.m., in celebration of St. Luke's 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Rev. Dr. Darwin P. Schrader will preach the Christmas message, and Rev. Dr. Arthur D. Eichhorn will accompany the singing of many beloved German Christmas carols. A German-English printed order of service will be furnished, and worshipers will go home with a German-English text of the sermon. *Gemütlichkeit* (fellowship hour) will follow in the Covington Township Hall. After expenses, the proceeds of the offering have been designated for Lutheran Braille Workers Workcenter #315 at New Minden. [St. Luke's is located between Okawville and New Minden, one mile north of IL 177 on Covington Road.]

## SCHOOL NEWS

**The VFW and ILS** are interested in hosting a blood drive at ILS and needs to conduct a interest survey, if you are interested in donating blood please add your name, email and phone # to the list on the small table in the Narthex.

**ILS Christmas Program** will be at the Okawville Community Club on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome!

**End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter** is December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Christmas Break** Last day is Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup> and classes will resume on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

## Sports Schedules

### Girls Basketball

Dec. 1 @ Central City 6:00 pm

Dec. 4 vs Holyeton-Trinity Defenders 6:00 pm

Dec. 5-7 Trinity Edwardsville Tip Off Tourn. TBA

Dec. 8 vs Waltonville 6:00 pm

Dec. 9 @ Sandoval 6:00 pm

Dec. 12 vs New Horizon 6:00 pm

Dec. 16 vs St. John Red Bud

### Boys Basketball

Dec. 1 vs Central City 6:00 pm

Dec. 2 @ St. John Red Bud 6:00 pm

Dec. 9 vs Ashley 6:00 pm

Dec. 15 @ Pinckneyville 204 5:30 pm

Dec. 18 vs New Athens 6:00 pm

## WEEKLY WORSHIP RESOURCE LISTINGS

### MID-WEEK ADVENT ONE SERVICE

**Wednesday, December 3, 2025**

Order of Service – Vespers  
Hymns: 354 Arise, O Christian People  
343 Prepare the Royal Highway  
357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

### SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT

**December 6 & December 7, 2025**

Old Testament: Isaiah 11:1-10  
Epistle: Romans 15:4-13  
Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12  
Order of Service – Divine Service Setting One  
Hymns: 342 What Hope! An Eden Prophesied  
690 Hope of the World  
333 Once He Came in Blessing  
338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus  
350 Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come  
344 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

### MID-WEEK ADVENT TWO SERVICE

**Wednesday, December 10, 2025**

Order of Service – Vespers  
Hymns: 354 Arise, O Christian People  
337 The Night Will Soon Be Ending  
357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

### THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

**December 14 & December 15, 2025**

Old Testament: Isaiah 35:1-10  
Epistle: James 5:7-11  
Gospel: Matthew 11:2-15  
Order of Service: Prayer and Preaching  
Hymns: 349 Hark the Glad Sound  
345 Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding  
387 Joy to the World

### MID-WEEK ADVENT THREE SERVICE

**Wednesday, December 17, 2025**

Order of Service – Vespers  
Hymns 354 Arise, O Christian People  
338 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus  
357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

### FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

**December 20 & December 21, 2025**

Old Testament: Isaiah 7:10-17  
Epistle: Romans 1:1-7  
Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25  
Order of Service Divine Service Setting Four  
Hymns: 900 Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love  
357 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
362 O Sing of Christ  
810 O God of God, O Light of Light  
970 Jesus, Name above All Names  
361 O Little Town of Bethlehem

### CHRISTMAS EVE

**December 24, 2025**

**5:30 p.m. Pre-service music; 6:00 p.m. service**

Children's Service  
Hymns: 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful  
364 Away in a Manger  
380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear  
370 What Child Is This  
388 Go Tell It on the Mountain  
368 Angels We Have Heard on High  
361 O Little Town of Bethlehem  
363 Silent Night, Holy Night  
387 Joy to the World

### CHRISTMAS DAY

**December 25, 2025 10:00 a.m.**

Old Testament: Isaiah 62:10-12  
Epistle: Titus 3:4-7  
Gospel: Luke 2:1-20  
Order of Service: Divine Service Setting Five  
Hymns 358 From Heaven Above to Earth I Come  
944 Kyrie (sung by choir)  
383 A Great and Mighty Wonder  
384 Of the Father's Love Begotten  
953 We All Believe in One True God  
361 O Little Town of Bethlehem  
636 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness  
623 Lord Jesus Christ, We Humbly Pray  
642 O Living Bread from Heaven  
388 Go Tell It on the Mountain

### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

**December 27 & December 28, 2025**

Old Testament: Isaiah 63:7-14  
Epistle: Galatians 4:4-7  
Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23  
Order of Service – Matins  
Hymns: 370 What Child Is This  
389 Let All Together Praise Our God  
725 Children of the Heavenly Father



**Christ Our Rock**  
**LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL**  
*Christmas Concert*



**WHAT** *Child* **IS THIS**

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025  
2:00 P.M.  
MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH  
CARLYLE, IL