



Our Mission: Immanuel Lutheran Church is a fellowship of believers committed to live and share God's love by serving our community and the world.

Our Vision: We gather as believers who seek to grow in faith through worship, education, and welcoming fellowship. We seek to share God's love with the community through word and deed. We extend Christ's love in service to our community and our world.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR JANUARY 2025

Dear Fellow Disciples of Christ:

Happy New Year to one and all.

I found this quote in my January "Bits & Pieces" and thought it to be a good start for my message this month. From Catherine Pulsifer- "A new year is like a blank book, and the pen is in your hands."

As God continues to guide us through this new year it is my hope that you will continue your support the church council as they continue discern our future. We continue to look for a church, with a Pastor, that we could merge with and have a new beginning. The council is currently looking at hiring a realtor to assist us in leasing or selling the building and land. We should be able to bring a recommendation to the Semi-annual Meeting scheduled for January 26th. We are also meeting with an architectural firm to determine what we can do to make the

building more attractive for leasing or selling. This part may not be ready for the 26th, but we can share what we do know about. Please review the 2025 Budget which has been prepared and recommended for your approval by the council.

The year ahead will be filled with many decisions that need to be made. It is my hope that our pens will not run out of ink as we work together to build for the future. I am full of hope that with God's love and guidance our book will not be empty at the end of December 2025.

In closing I would like to share another quote from "Bits & Pieces". From Ernie J. Zelinski – "In January, let go of the old; welcome in the new; and cherish the possibilities of that lie ahead."

*Yours in Christ,
Bob Henning, President*

Beloved Community,

Grace and peace to you all as we usher in the new year, as we are met with the crispness of January—a time of fresh beginnings, renewed hopes, and the promise of Emmauel, God's abiding presence with us. The days may still be short, and the cold chill of winter may linger as broken icicles gleam from trees, and yet this time of year embodies a deep reminder of hope: the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Light that continues to shine on us today – especially in our times of darkness – when we aren't feeling particularly joyful, when our reality is painful, and when the world feels broken.

Because living a life of faith doesn't make everything easy, living a life of faith can be hard. And sometimes living a life of faith can feel more like a "cold and broken hallelujah." Famous words echoed from Leonard Cohen's song

“*Hallelujah.*” A beautiful song that touches on the raw reality of faith and how even in our brokenness, pain, and hurt – somehow, we can still sing hallelujah.

Now it may not always come easy, in fact, it may come out cold and broken. And yet even in our cold and broken state, we are loved. Loved by a God who brings us courage and hope. So we can continue in hope and love, even when it is hard, painful, or messy. Because “Love is not a victory march, it's a cold and broken hallelujah.”

And thankfully we do not endure this journey alone; we are in this together, we are a community of faith. Which means we hold one another’s hallelujah’s when they are too hard for others to say, when they can only see the glimmer of a hallelujah on the horizon.

Whatever this new year has in store, whatever cold or brokenness you may encounter, whatever joys or challenges this year may bring, remember you are not alone. You have a community of faith, and you have the light of Christ, the light no darkness can overcome.

With Love & Gratitude,

Pastor Maggie Westaby



Thank you for your regular offerings. Donations support our regular ministry and mission. This makes a difference in the lives of many who are touched by our ministry every day. Your gifts also are an expression of your faith and an offering of thanksgiving to God.

There are several ways to make a gift:

- ✓ Mail a check to 630 Adams St. Wausau, WI 54403.
- ✓ Place your offering in the offering plate before worship service.

- ✓ You can leave your offering in the safe box at the entry door of the church parking lot.
- ✓ Use your bank's online bill pay service to send a contribution - this is usually free, and you don't need to pay for postage.



The next **Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting** is to be determined.

The Alzheimer's and Dementia Caregiver Support Group will meet on **January 14, 2025 @ 9:00 am - 10:30 pm**. This is an Alzheimer's Association sponsored caregiver support group in partnership with the ADRC of Central Wisconsin. This is a safe place for family and friends who are caring for someone living Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. The groups are not intended for the person living with dementia or professional caregivers. To register contact Scott Seeger at (715) 261-6066 or Jennifer Thompson at (715) 261-6086.

The **ILC Semi Annual & Budget Meeting** will be held **9:15am-10:15am on Sunday, January 26, 2025**.

The ADRC offers a Loan Closet program to assist people in obtaining equipment on a 'no fee' basis for up to 6 months. The following items are often (although not always) available: walkers (2-wheel and 4-wheel), wheelchairs, canes, and shower benches. We occasionally have other items, such as 'reachers' and sock aids. For additional information, please contact ADRC at (888) 486-9545.

AARP Volunteer Tax Aide Program. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Foundation & the IRS sponsor the Tax-Aide program. IRS tax law-certified volunteers will prepare federal, Wisconsin, & Homestead Credit tax returns. The free service is open to anyone, with special consideration given to individuals w/low & moderate income & those aged 50 & over. If you live in Marathon County, please call (715) 298-5734 starting January 21, 2025, for

additional information.

Food Pantry Donations

The Neighbors' Place welcomes donations for their food pantry. They are especially in need of toilet paper, shampoo, lotion, laundry soap, dish soap, juice, beef stew, mayo, cookies, canned fruit, and sugar. If you would like to donate non-perishable foods or basic supplies, you may place them on the black cart next to the pew near the Gathering Room and they will be delivered to the Neighbors' Place.

The Men's Discussion Group meets Thursdays at 7:30 am, in the Koinonia room. New participants are always welcome.

Strong Bones Senior Exercise Group meets every Tuesday and Thursday in the old Nursery at 10:30 am. The class is open to anyone wishing to improve balance and maintain strength to prevent falls. New faces are happily welcome.



The following individuals are celebrating their birthday! Dan Dellenbach (01/03), Jennifer Schafer (01/04), Sarah Doede (01/06), Susan Schwede (01/06), Harlan Grinde (01/09), Elaine Grinde (01/10), Connie Lewitzke (01/12), Marge Warner (01/22), Scott Schafer (01/25), Vern Diestelhorst (01/26), Corey Busche (01/29)

A very Happy Birthday to all of you celebrating in January!



Bruce & Kathy Knox (48 years) 01/07, Bob & Sue Doede (48 years) 01/24

Our Sister Church is the Lobatla Parish. Pastor Elijah Lekwate. Email for Justice Pule: pulejustice74@gmail.com

The Homme Adult Day Center offers a safe, stimulating, and supportive environment for adults who need assistance. It provides a much-needed respite for caregivers, allowing them time to work, attend appointments, or recharge. I have placed a letter from Arielle Noble, Coordinator on the ILC bulletin board with all the details and half-day passes to the Homme Adult Day Center. The complimentary pass would allow you to experience their services firsthand and know there is a support system waiting to be of service should you choose.

Thank You!!

The Altar Guild for setting up our beautiful Advent and Christmas services!
Thank you also, to all who have helped in the worship services.
Thank you, Joan Winterhoff, for providing beautiful greeting and Christmas cards.
Thank you, Bell Choir, for an amazing performance on Christmas Eve!

New Year Devotion: Walking in God's Light

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
—Psalm 119:105 (NRSV)

As we step into the new year of 2025, we are reminded that each day is a gift from God, filled with opportunities to grow in faith and love. The beginning of a new year often brings resolutions and fresh starts. Yet, in our striving, we can find comfort knowing that it is not our strength but God's guidance that lights our way.

Psalm 119:105 reminds us that God's Word is a constant source of clarity, hope, and direction. In a world full of uncertainties, His promises remain steadfast. As we make plans and face challenges this year, let us turn to Scripture, where we find wisdom for our decisions and peace for our hearts.

We hold fast to the assurance that we are saved by grace through faith. This truth gives us freedom to walk confidently into the year ahead, trusting that God's light will never fade, no matter how dark the path may seem.

May 2025 be a year where we seek God in prayer, serve others with joy, and rest in His unchanging love. Let us embrace each moment as an opportunity to reflect His light in our homes, our community, and beyond.

Blessings to you and your family for the year ahead!

**Immanuel Lutheran Church
2024 Income vs Expenses**

| Month | Income Received | Expenses Paid | Notes | Difference | Spec Funds income | Total Deposit |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| January | \$12,713 | \$12,602 | | \$110.78 | \$76.54 | \$12,789.54 |
| February | \$10,764 | \$8,031 | | \$2,733.44 | \$605 | \$11,369.33 |
| March | \$10,814 | \$6,426 | | \$4,388.38 | \$132.00 | \$10,946.00 |
| April | \$12,965 | \$7,730 | | \$5,234.71 | \$1,556.00 | \$14,521.00 |
| May | \$8,092 | \$8,168 | | (\$76.17) | \$97.00 | \$8,189.00 |
| June | \$11,171 | \$4,075 | | \$7,096.50 | \$194.00 | \$11,365.00 |
| July | \$11,303 | \$5,946 | | \$5,357.06 | \$1,424.00 | \$12,727.00 |
| August | \$9,743 | \$8,720 | | \$1,022.84 | \$43.00 | \$9,786.00 |
| September | \$16,968 | \$3,399 | | \$13,569.07 | \$856.00 | \$17,823.61 |
| October | \$9,434 | \$8,864 | | \$569.69 | \$170.00 | \$9,604.00 |
| November | \$20,273 | \$8,395 | | \$11,877.96 | \$1,520.00 | \$21,792.70 |
| December | | | | \$0.00 | | \$0.00 |
| Totals | \$134,239.64 | \$82,355.38 | | \$51,884.26 | \$6,673.54 | \$140,913.18 |

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting - November 19, 2024

Members Present: President - Bob Henning, Treasurer – Matt Munson, Financial Secretary - Patti Busche, Properties – Dan Westaby, Worship - Holly Westaby, Social Concerns – Kathy Knox, Stewardship – Rick Lohr

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Devotions: led by Holly – Being Thankful – Focus on what you have instead of what you lack

Church Officers Reports:

Secretary Report: Reviewed minutes from meeting on 10/27/24. Motion to approve made by Rick; 2nd by Matt. Motion carried

Treasurer Report: Reviewed reports from 9/30/24 and 10/31/24. Motion to approve made by Patti; 2nd by Rick. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary: Reviewed October report. Motion to approve made by Matt; 2nd by Kathy. Motion carried.

Vice President Report- position open

President – 2 realtors are being contacted to take a look at what the building/land might be worth on the open market.

Committee Reports:

Education: No report

Properties Report:

1. Stuart Roofing has been contacted about roof repair. Too late in year to do anything so will review in spring.
2. Contacted City Hall about elevator oil use to find out if it can be tested. They provided number of State Elevator inspector.
3. Carpet cleaning estimate received for Fellowship Hall and Gathering Room. Going with lower estimate \$783 with Carpet & Steam (?).
4. Salt, sand and shovels have been put out by all the exit doors.

Social Concerns: St. Stephen's pick up the coats/clothes for donation to the school districts.

Stewardship: 27 pledge cards returned for pledges of \$75,500. This is down from last year.

Worship Report:

1. Will decorate for Christmas after 11/24 service with pizza to follow.
2. Carols & Candles services will be on 12/22.
3. Kathy Robinson will be gone the first 3 weeks in January.

Unfinished Business:

1. Kathy Robinson has not returned a signed contract yet. Chances of her being approved for SAM are slim.
2. Scholarship fund: what needs to be done to open up the funds for outside of Immanuel? Bob will contact Kari Solomonson (scholarship chair). Perhaps the Immanuel scholarship can be opened up to a Seminary college or local schools.

New Business:

1. Congregational Energy Audit responses have been received. Bob will be doing an analysis and will present to the Council before presenting at a future coffee hour.
2. Budget: Reviewed 2024 budget and recommended changes for 2025. Matt will create new budget and present to Council for approval.
3. Church Seasonal Offering disbursement: Bridge Street Mission \$250; Salvation Army \$250; Women's Community \$250. Motion made by Patti and 2nd by Holly. Motion approved.

Round Table: next semi-annual meeting has been set for January 26 at 9:15.

Next council meeting – Tuesday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:10 p.m.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Busche, Financial Secretary

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
2025 OPERATING BUDGET
Not approved by Council

| | 2024 Budget | 2024 Actual | 2025 Budget | % Change from 2024 Budget |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Operating Revenues | | | | |
| Pledges | 105,044 | 120,000 | 86,000 | -18.13% |
| Rent income | 1,700 | 1,700 | 1,700 | 0.00% |
| Unpledged giving | 39,300 | 25,000 | 31,455 | -19.96% |
| Total Revenue | 146,044 | 146,700 | 119,155 | -18.41% |
| <i>% of budget that is unpledged</i> | 26.91% | 17.04% | 26.40% | |
| Benevolences | | | | |
| Synod | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.00% |
| LSS | 450 | 450 | 300 | -33.33% |
| Missionary | 300 | 300 | 300 | 0.00% |
| GWCS | 300 | 300 | - | -100.00% |
| Crossways Camping | 500 | 500 | 500 | 0.00% |
| Crossways international co | 200 | 200 | 200 | 0.00% |
| World Hunger | 160 | 160 | 125 | -21.88% |
| Total Benevolences | 2,910 | 2,910 | 2,425 | -16.67% |
| Benevolence Percentage | 2% | 2% | 2.0% | |
| Staff Wages | | | | |
| Worship Leader | 40,044 | 9,500 | 10,000 | -75.03% |
| Secretary | 23,600 | 14,000 | 23,600 | 0.00% |
| Bookkeeping | 3,980 | 3,978 | 4,080 | 2.51% |
| Outdoor Custodian | 1 | 1 | 4,000 | 399900.00% |
| Indoor Custodian | 4,100 | 450 | 4,000 | -2.44% |
| Organist | 4,500 | 3,000 | 4,500 | 0.00% |
| Supply Pastor | 1,500 | - | 1,500 | 0.00% |
| Total Staff Wages | 77,725 | 30,929 | 51,680 | -33.51% |
| Staff Costs | | | | |
| FICA Tax | 2,500 | 1,500 | 2,500 | 0.00% |
| Worker's Comp. | 1,000 | 987 | 1,000 | 0.00% |
| Payroll Services | 2,300 | 2,300 | 3,000 | 30.43% |
| Accounting Services | 150 | - | 150 | 0.00% |
| Total Staff Costs | 5,950 | 4,787 | 6,650 | 11.76% |
| Other | | | | |
| Synod Assembly | 250 | 589 | 500 | 100.00% |
| Properties | 10,000 | 11,000 | 12,000 | 20.00% |
| Property Insurance | 9,500 | 10,100 | 10,500 | 10.53% |
| Utilities | 25,000 | 23,000 | 25,000 | 0.00% |
| Snow Plowing | 1,200 | 945 | 2,000 | 66.67% |
| Office | 4,800 | 4,500 | 4,900 | 2.08% |
| Social Concerns | 400 | 220 | 400 | 0.00% |
| Stewardship | 1,000 | 550 | 600 | -40.00% |
| Worship | 1,800 | 1,000 | 1,500 | -16.67% |
| Church Council | 250 | 415 | 1,000 | 300.00% |
| Other Total | 54,200 | 52,319 | 58,400 | 7.75% |
| Expense Total | 140,785 | 90,945 | 119,155 | -15.36% |
| Rev - Exp | 5,259 | 55,755 | - | |

Serving us in January 2025

Pastor Tryphine, Deacon Everett Schmidt, Kathy Robinson and Rev Helling will be serving us this month

| DATE | PIANIST / ORGANIST | READER | USHER / GREETERS | VIDEO TAPER | COMMUNION |
|---|--------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1/5/2025 | Delores Kessel | Al Solomonson | Bruce Knox | Bob Henning | |
| 1/12/2025 | Karen Zuidema | Adam Doede | Bob Doede | Bob Henning | |
| 1/19/2025 | Delores Kessel | Holly Westaby | Dan Westaby | Bob Henning | |
| 1/26/2024 | Karen Zuidema | Sue Schwede | Mike Schwede | Bob Henning | |
| Altar Guild: Kathy Knox, Joanne Distelhorst, Pattie Bricko and Holly Westaby | | | | | |

New Year's Quiz: Hymn Edition

1. This hymn, often sung at the start of a new year, includes the words, "join to raise with heartfelt joy to your maker's praise!" and celebrates the wonder of God's creation.

- A. "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"
- B. "Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices"
- C. "This Is My Father's World"
- D. "All Creatures, Worship God Most High!"

2. Known as Luther's battle hymn, this piece is a cornerstone of Lutheran identity and faith. The fourth verse begins with, "God's Word forever shall abide,"

- A. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"
- B. "God of Grace and God of Glory"
- C. "Lift High the Cross"
- D. "Faith of Our Fathers"

3. This hymn, frequently sung during Christmas and New Year's services, includes the lines, "Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!"

- A. "Angels We Have Heard on High"
- B. "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"
- C. "Joy to the World"
- D. "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

4. A reflective hymn that often accompanies prayers for peace and renewal, it includes the words, "Let this be my solemn vow to take each moment and live."

- A. "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil"
- B. "Let There Be Peace on Earth"
- C. "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"
- D. "All Are Welcome"

5. This hymn is a joyful celebration of God's faithfulness, often sung as a closing hymn, with the lyrics, "Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free."

- A. "Now Thank We All Our God"
- B. "Go, My Children, with My Blessing"
- C. "For All the Saints"
- D. "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

Answers: 1. **B.** "Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices" – A hymn of exuberant praise, perfect for beginning a new year with joy. 2. **A.** "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" – Martin Luther's powerful hymn reminds us of God's strength and protection. 3. **C.** "Joy to the World" – A favorite Christmas hymn that rejoices in the Savior's reign. 4. **B.** "Let There Be Peace on Earth" – This hymn calls for personal and global peace, an inspiring New Year's resolution. 5. **B.** "Go, My Children, with My Blessing" – A tender hymn reminding us of God's care as we step into the future.



Psalm 71:9 "Do not cast me off in the time of old"

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☞ Here are our church friends who are not able to come to church as often as they would like. They would love to hear from you or receive cards in the mail. Please call the church office if someone should be added to list. ☎