

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
229 11TH AVE W  
GRINNELL IA 50112-8217

*January Newsletter*

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH LC-MS**

**229 11TH AVENUE WEST**

**GRINNELL, IA 50112**

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**ALL SOCIAL MEDIA LINKS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE  
SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED ON OUR FACEBOOK**

**LET US KNOW...**

**If you have a change in address, phone or email, have a loved one who is or hospitalized, have a new baby, would like a pastoral visit, or if you would like a special prayer during the prayers of the church on Sunday, please contact Pastor Koepp or the church office.**

**DO YOU...**

**want to put something in the bulletin or newsletter?**

**Have a prayer request? Birth/Anniversary/Graduation announcements?**

**If so, please submit the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin or newsletter by the deadlines listed below to the church secretary at [immanuellutheran@iowatelecom.net](mailto:immanuellutheran@iowatelecom.net).**

**Deadline for submitting in the weekly bulletin is Thursdays by noon.**

**Deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 15th of each month.**

**For those of you without email access, please call or submit your written request to the church secretary.**



## **2024 Immanuel Officers & Board Members**

**President** Steve Haase

**Vice President/President Elect** Lucas Bayer

**Secretary** Kathy Stanek

**Treasurer** Chris Christinson

**Elders** Joel McDonough, Steve Haase, Darlo Kelting, Ken Mergen

**Trustees** Kevin Schultz, Ben Louden, Dan Huebner

**Board of Education** Sherry Baker, Danielle McDonough, Markie Koepf

**Board of Stewardship** Keith Thorpe, Pam Sittig, Diane Schultz

**Board of Evangelism & Missions** June Routier, Bev Huebner, Dianna Kelting

**Organists** Pam Haase, Amber Bayer, Esther Huedepohl

**Pianist** Sophia Louden

**Church Secretary** Amber Carnine

**Sunday School Opening** Pastor Koepf

**LWML Board** President: Pam Haase    Treasurer: June Routier    Secretary: Pam Haase

**Altar Guild** Helen Thorpe    June Routier    Danielle McDonough    Pam Haase    Pam Sittig  
Esther Huedepohl (Backup)



# *Bello January*

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# *A Message from our Pastor*



As we begin a new calendar year, there are many expectations. Before launching into a new year, we take a moment to reflect upon the past year. What were the things that stand out in your year? Happy, sad, good, bad, and even ugly? It is perfect on this night of reflection that we reminded by St. Paul, ***“If God is for us, who can be against us?”*** (Romans 8:31b)

This past year has been filled with much tribulation, in the world, in our society, in our homes, and even in our own bodies. Sin and Satan have battered us day by day and there may have been times where we were just not sure if the year would end. Many of us couldn't wait for the end of the year to come and we could start a new year; next year has to be better, right? We get to start off 2024 with a clean slate, right?

This is not the first new year that you have had, and so it will come as no surprise to you that things do not magically change when the ball drops and 2024 begins. Next year will have its struggles, and pain, its losses and trials. We do right to wish everyone a happy new year, but we know that the entire year will not be completely happy.

But, “If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? 36 As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.” 37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:31b-39)

Yes, we will have struggles and troubles, but we are never alone. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God, not even death. Jesus has died the death on the cross. We who have been baptized into Christ, have been buried with Him into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may walk in newness of life.

As we begin a new year, we do so knowing that if God is for us, who can be against us? This doesn’t mean the whole year is promised to be smooth sailing. What is promised is that whatever may come, good or bad or anything in-between, the very God of heaven and earth, Jesus Christ has joined you to Himself. Jesus! Name of wondrous love, Name all other names above, Name decreed of old, Name of priceless worth, Name of mercy mild, is the very name which is given to you. Joined with water and sealed with Word, the name of Christ, the victory of the Lamb of God over sin and Satan is yours.

On the 8th day, Jesus was circumcised and given the name Jesus, which means “He saves.” The name of Salvation belongs to you. You have been made a child of God and never to be forgotten. That name has been joined to bread and wine, you are given the very body and blood of Jesus. What a fitting way to end the year. We close the year with forgiveness for all of our sins, and receive strength from that very body and blood of God’s dear son, strength to live the new year in love and faith. Strength to live out our lives in Jesus’ name! Strength to live in love and mercy.

As we begin a new year, God reminds us again that He will never leave us nor forsake us. No matter what happens in the next year, God is God and we are His people. He is our Father who art in heaven, His is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for how long? Forever and ever. Thus we can end our old year, as we do each night, "AMEN," which means, "yes, let it be so Lord."

Join me this month in singing: *If God Himself Be for Me LSB 724*



1 If God Him - self be for me, I may a host de - fy;  
 2 I build on this foun - da - tion, That Je - sus and His blood  
 3 Christ Je - sus is my splen - dor, My sun, my light, a - lone;  
 4 He can - celed my of - fens - es, De - liv - ered me from death;



For when I pray, be - fore me My foes, con - found - ed, fly.  
 A - lone are my sal - va - tion, My true, e - ter - nal good.  
 Were He not my de - fend - er Be - fore God's judg - ment throne,  
 He is the Lord who cleans - es My soul from sin through faith.



If Christ, my head and mas - ter, Be - friend me from a - bove,  
 With - out Him all that pleas - es Is val - ue - less on earth;  
 I nev - er should find fa - vor And mer - cy in His sight,  
 In Him I can be cheer - ful, Cou - ra - geous on my way;



What foe or what dis - as - ter Can drive me from His love?  
 The gifts I have from Je - sus A - lone have price - less worth.  
 But be de - stroyed for - ev - er As dark - ness by the light.  
 In Him I am not fear - ful Of God's great Judg - ment Day.

5 For no one can condemn me  
 Or set my hope aside;  
 Now hell no more can claim me:  
 Its fury I deride.  
 No sentence now reproves me,  
 No guilt destroys my peace;  
 For Christ, my Savior, loves me  
 And shields me with His grace.

6 Who clings with resolution  
 To Him whom Satan hates  
 Must look for persecution;  
 For him the burden waits  
 Of mock'ry, shame, and losses  
 Heaped on his blameless head;  
 A thousand plagues and crosses  
 Will be his daily bread.



- 7 From me this is not hidden,  
Yet I am not afraid;  
I leave my cares, as bidden,  
To whom my vows were paid.  
Though life from me be taken  
And ev'rything I own,  
I trust in You unshaken  
And cleave to You alone.
- 8 No danger, thirst, or hunger,  
No pain or poverty,  
No earthly tyrant's anger  
Shall ever vanquish me.  
Though earth should break asunder,  
My fortress You shall be;  
No fire or sword or thunder  
Shall sever You from me.
- 9 No angel and no gladness,  
No throne, no pomp, no show,  
No love, no hate, no sadness,  
No pain, no depth of woe,  
No scheming, no contrivance,  
No subtle thing or great  
Shall draw me from Your guidance  
Nor from You separate.
- 10 My heart with joy is springing;  
I am no longer sad.  
My soul is filled with singing;  
Your sunshine makes me glad.  
The sun that cheers my spirit  
Is Jesus Christ, my King;  
The heav'n I shall inherit  
Makes me rejoice and sing.

*Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76; (sts. 1, 3–5, 10): tr. Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book, 1907, Pittsburgh, alt.;  
(sts. 2, 6–9): tr. Richard Massie, 1800–87, alt.  
Tune: Vierundzwanzig geistliche Lieder, 1609, Augsburg  
Text and tune: Public domain*

+ Soli Deo Gloria +  
Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koeppe



## President's Piece for Peace



Have you ever said, “Asher Rosh Hashanah?” Probably not in those exact words but you have said them before, only in English. They are Hebrew for “Happy New Year.” While there is no biblical reference in the Old Testament celebrating the New Year, it had become a festival all to its own with prescriptions and feasts. The Jewish calendar celebrates New Year on the first of September (Tishri). In their calendar it is the 7th month. It was a time of solemn prayer, personal stocktaking, and quiet joy. No hoopla, whistles, or horns at midnight.

Rosh Hashanah would be celebrated over 10 days with the people thinking over their past deeds of the previous year and trying to make a fresh start during the upcoming year. It was traditional to clear up misunderstandings with the family and friends. Each one must search his soul with penitence and make new resolutions for the future. During those ten days God exercised His judgement upon all who fail to keep His Law. Their only hope: symbolism. Their rejection of Jesus has let them with nothing but ritual symbolism.

The main custom of Rosh Hashanah was to go to fresh running water on the first of September (Tishri). There they would say a prayer to the Almighty asking Him to wash away from them all their sins and drop them in the depths of the water. After that came the festival of feasts.

Each of the foods prepared and consumed had a symbolic nature to them. The head of the family would read from Nehemiah where the prophet says: “Eat of the fat and drink of the sweet.” For this reason, sweet foods are the order of the day. A staple for this festival was fish, commonly called “gefilte fish.” It was broiled fish dipped in honey and covered with nuts. The symbolism was fruitfulness and plenty, a good wish for each other for the coming year.

Accompanying the fish were slices of apples covered in honey. Carrots were sliced in round cuts to visualize money. It was a way of wishing for a prosperous new year. Young couples who desired a child in the upcoming year would consume pomegranates with its many seeds symbolizing fruitfulness.

All of these were met with prayer for forgiveness for wrongs of the past and blessings for the future. To ensure the prayers would be heard, they would bake pastry (challah) and decorate them with a ladder on top, or a bird.

These would provide a means for the wishes and prayers to reach the heavens.

How about you? What is your New Year celebration going to consist of? Maybe some of the same rituals but with a certainty that Jewish Rosh Hashanah cannot provide. Let's begin with the water. We have already been taken to the water that has drowned the Old Adam and brought forth the redeemed child of God. This is already complete in the blessed gift of baptism.

I suppose we will have feasts of sweet foods on our dinner tables. But what is the sweetest of all is not a symbol of anything. It is the real and present Body and Blood of Jesus who forgives our sins and strengthens faith in Him for each day let alone the upcoming year. Our connection to fish is as sweet and fruitful as it gets. The Greek letters for fish spell out "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior." He is our great joy for peace in any day, the days past as well as the days to come. For in Him we have a day that will not be followed by any other day. The day of the resurrection will bring us home to live in the mansion prepared for us before the beginning of time.

All of this is safe and secure. The security is not found in our resolutions to do better this upcoming year. Truth be told, we can make efforts galore but will fall dreadfully short of the perfection God requires. That is why our joy for this new year rests solely in Jesus Christ and His merits. He went to the cross of judgment because reflection on our self can only reveal the need for a Savior. That is who Jesus is, our Savior from sin, death, and the Devil. There can be no peace and joy without Him.

Our prayers ascend to the Father through Jesus, not because of a pastry with a bird on it. They ascend because Jesus has redeemed us to the Father with perfect obedience and sacrifice. The Father accepted His payment on our behalf demonstrated in Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

No symbolism here, just real, and divine facts from His Word. All of what we do in the Church points to Jesus who is present with us in Divine Service and promises to splash us with His gifts unto eternal life. That to me is the best way to enter the new year. In fact, I would change the "Asher Rosh Hashanah" to "Barak Rosh Hashanah." The difference? The latter says "Blessed New Year." That is our prayer for each other, blessings from God that are sweeter than honey.

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders  
District President

# Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca



## Summer Camp 2024 - Immanuel: God With Us

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

As 2023 winds down, our planning has now focused on next year. Mark your calendars! Registration opens for the 2024 summer camp program on **January 15!** Our summer camp theme is **“Immanuel: God With Us”** based on John 1:14. More information on our theme and registration will be available soon, so stay tuned!

Tentatively, our summer camp program will begin on June 12 and end on August 2. Staff training will likely kick off on May 29. Be sure to stay tuned at our website for more information. Our tentative schedule will be posted early to mid December.

Despite having great attendance once again this past summer, we had to turn away around nearly 75 campers because we didn't have enough summer staff. The time to start thinking about serving on Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca's 2024 summer staff is now! You can get your application process started today by heading to [www.nloma.org](http://www.nloma.org).

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca is one of dozens of Lutheran camps across the country looking for college-aged young adults to make a difference in the lives of children. The opportunity to serve at a camp awaits. Go to [www.nloma.org](http://www.nloma.org) to start your summer camp service, coming in early November!

Please contact Camp Program Director Alec Deppe by emailing [programdirector@iodiseca.org](mailto:programdirector@iodiseca.org) for more information on how you can work, learn, grow, and have an experience of a lifetime by serving on Camp's summer staff!



## IDE Middle School Retreat (and Snowlympics!) January 26-27

The upcoming IDE Middle School Retreat and Snowlympics is scheduled for January 26-27, 2024 at Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca! Pastor Andrew Gray of St. John Lutheran Church in Marengo will present on **Creation's Night**. Visit <https://lcmSIDE.org/msretreat/> for more information and to register!



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## **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article**

### ***The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad***

St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, “Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land” (Eph. 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,” and “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:37–39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. Murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of “you shall not murder”? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up on thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us and teaches His Word to us through our parents.

So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift: the gift of life.

Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have — whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time — is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes.

– **LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)**



**MEMORY WORK  
FOR THE  
MONTH OF  
JANUARY**

**CONFIRMATION**

**5th & 6th Grades Memory Work**

- 3 Confession: *What do you believe according to these words?*
- 10 NO CLASS
- 17 NO CLASS
- 24 Sacrament of the Altar: *What is the Sacrament of the Altar?*
- 31 Sacrament of the Altar: *Where is this written?*

**7th & 8th Grades Memory Work**

- 3 Questioning Books
- 10 NO CLASS
- 17 NO CLASS
- 24 Questioning Books
- 31 Questioning Books



## Into Hell His Road Went Down:



The Harrowing of Hell  
and the Great Exodus of Jesus.

**2024 Winter Youth Retreat**

Friday and Saturday, January 12-13, 2024

Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
1100 Market Street Carlisle Iowa  
[www.holycrosscarlisle.org](http://www.holycrosscarlisle.org)

**Here is what we are going to be learning:**

"He descended into hell," but why, and what did he do there? Join us as we journey through the Old and New Testaments, and the Early Church Fathers to witness God's great victory in Jesus' descent into hell, and what it means for us as Christians.

**Our Presenter:**

The Rev. Eamonn M. Ferguson serves as pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Mound City, Missouri. He graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in 2017 with a Master of Divinity, and in 2018 with a Master of Sacred Theology in Church History. Rev. Ferguson is currently engaged with a new translation of the Didache with commentary. He and his wife Carolyn have been blessed with one daughter, Saoirse.

**Friday, January 12**

6:00 pm	Registration
7:00 pm	Games
8:00 pm	Vespers
8:45 pm	Presentation I
9:30 pm	Games / Free Time
11:30 pm	Compline
12:00 am	Lights Out

**Saturday, January 13**

8:00 am	Breakfast
9:30 am	Matins
10:00 am	Presentation II
11:00 am	Games / Free Time
11:45 am	Lunch / Clean Up
12:30 pm	Presentation III
1:30 pm	Ask Pastor
2:30 pm	Suffrages and Itinerarium

**Cost is \$30 per person.**

*Confirmation age youth and older are encouraged to attend. If you desire to stay overnight at the church, bring a sleeping bag, toothbrush and pillow. Board games are encouraged.*

*Any questions, contact Rev. Kevin Johnson at 515-721-6675 or [pastorj.holycross@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorj.holycross@yahoo.com).*



## **Voters' Assembly after the service Sunday, January 21st**

If you are not a member and desire to become one:

4.3.1 Definition: Voting members are communicants who have reached the age of 18 years and who have been received by the Voters' Assembly.

4.3.2 Reception: Applicants for voting membership shall have received a copy of the constitution and be given time to review it. They shall be received as voting members by presenting themselves at a meeting of the Voters' Assembly and signing the constitution.

**A New Church  
Directory is  
Coming!**



**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**Monthly Meeting of the Church Council**  
**Sunday, November 12, 2023**

The regular monthly meeting of the Church Council was held on November 12th at 8:00 AM. Present: Pastor Koepp, Steve Haase, Keith Thorpe, Chris Christinson, Darlo Kelting, Diane Schultz, Kevin Schultz, Pam Sittig, June Routier, Danielle McDonough, and Kathy Stanek.

Joel called the meeting to order, and Pastor Koepp opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes from the October 8th meeting was presented for approval.

Chris motioned to approve with and Diane 2nd – Motion Carried.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND BOARDS**

**Board of Elders:** Joel McDonough

- Preparing the winter schedule and continuing monthly devotions. There are 3 Advent services in December.

**Treasurer's Report:** Chris Christinson

- Written reports attached. All bills have been paid and the current balances are reflected. Purchased two more CD's.

**Board of Trustees:** Kevin Schultz

- BAU – Lawn treatment completed.

**Board of Evangelism:** June Routier

- A Thanksgiving pot luck dinner will be at the church Wednesday evening November 15th.
- Decorating a Christmas tree at the Drake Library and continue provide treats to students once a month.
- A mailing of the Lutheran Witness will be sent to visitors.
- Diane asked if members could be sent some mailings once a quarter. Amber has a list of who does not want mailings but items could be sent to those who like them. Every quarter a "We Miss You" letter will be sent to members who have not been in attendance.

**Board of Education:** Danielle McDonough

- Christmas program parts will be selected today with proactive starting next Sunday.
- Continue with popcorn Sunday's and kid sing during church service.

**Board of Stewardship:** Pam Sittig

- Giving is steady with no issues to report.
- 3rd quarter giving statements have been delivered.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Koepp

- Our Savior in Newton is beginning the call process for a Pastor.
- Providing spiritual leadership to members of Immanuel church, preparing weekly sermons, preaching, and conducting worship services. Leading Confirmation and Bible Study classes.
- Counseling/home visits, attending board meetings, visiting sick/shut-ins as allowed and providing Communion to those who cannot attend Sunday Divine service.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None

With no other business to discuss Keith motioned to adjourn and Pam 2nd.  
Meeting adjourned

Voters Meeting: Dec 10, 2023, 10:30am

Submitted by:

Kathy Stanek  
Council Secretary