

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

January Newsletter

**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH LC-MS
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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...

have an announcement for 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 lcms.immanuelgrinnell@gmail.com

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.



Welcome January

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Pastor's Message

As you read this, you are either in the midst of Christmas celebration, or in the midst of Epiphany celebration. The season of Epiphany is almost seen as an afterthought to Christmas in the minds of many. We are familiar with Advent and Christmas, Lent and Easter. How does Epiphany fit into the puzzle?

In the early days of church history, the resurrection of our Lord was heralded as the most important day. It was celebrated every week, as the believers would gather around God's word and Sacrament in eager anticipation of Christ's return. As the years marched on, Easter became a grand yearly celebration, and times of preparation were developed leading up to it (Lent) and celebration after (Easter Season). Starting in the second century, Christians in the East began to observe the birth of Jesus on January 6th. Western Christians later began to observe the birth of our Lord on December 25th. By the end of the fourth century, churches throughout the world began to celebrate both of these days on their church calendars. The time between December 25 and January 6th was known as the 12 Days of Christmas.

In the beginning the church in the East associated the day of Epiphany with Christ's baptism. In the Western church, since Epiphany was after their day of celebration of his birth on December 25th, they associated it with the visit of the wise men—the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. As the church year developed, several “firsts” of Christ’s ministry were associated with what is now known as the Epiphany season.

The day of Epiphany is always January 6. The length of the Epiphany Season varies from year to year, as it is dependent upon the date of Easter—if Easter is early, Epiphany is shorter. There is a rather interesting aspect to the season as it is marked by two different liturgical colors.

It begins and end with white, which are the colors of festivity. As a bridge from Jesus birth to His suffering, crucifixion and death, it shows Jesus' living life as God in the flesh. We trace some important events from His baptism to His transfiguration. For the Sundays between these two events, the color is green; the same color during the Trinity Season in which we mark ordinary time.

A key aspect of Epiphany is contemplation over Jesus, who lived as an ordinary man, like each of us; and yet He was at the same time fully God. The term epiphany captures the idea of a moment of revelation, or a realization of some aspect affecting our lives; an eye-opening tick of time where all the pieces come together and it just makes sense. During the Epiphany Season, the key aspects of are not our moments of realization; rather, they are His revealing Himself to us.

The illuminating knowledge of Christ is the point of the texts read during the Epiphany season. We begin with the coming of the Magi, bringing gifts that proclaim to the world the very work of the Christ-child. Gold proclaims His kingly office and His divinity. Frankincense proclaims the sacrifice He was to offer upon the cross. Myrrh proclaims He was to die; die to destroy the power of sin, death, and the devil.

Following the coming of the Magi, we read of Christ's baptism. As He descends into the waters, He bears our iniquities. He takes our sins upon Himself, so that in our baptism He may bestow His life upon us.

Next, we read of Jesus' first miracle at the wedding at Cana. He demonstrates that not only does He have power over the natural forces of the world, He also upholds the honor of marriage. Why? Because He uses the marriage relationship to teach us something about His relationship to us, His bride, the Church.

This year we will hear of several other epiphanies, as well as how these are lived and expressed through the words and lives of Peter's confession and Paul's conversion. The Last Sunday of the Epiphany Season is in February this year, but for the sake of brief thoroughness, on that day, we read of Jesus' transfiguration.

In a few brief moments, the veil of humanity is lifted and the disciples behold the glory of Christ; they will need this strength to make it through the events of Holy Week. As they watch Jesus suffer, they know He will come again in glory.

This is a wonderful time of the Church Year. Following the heels of Christmas and living in its afterglow, we are ever in need of the remembrance just who Christ is. He is God in the flesh. He was born. He lived a human life, was tempted and never failed. He suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried. He rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. All of this so that we may be His own, and live under Him in His Kingdom for all eternity.

+Soli Deo Gloria+

Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koepp

Hymn 'Songs of Thankfulness and Praise'

LSB 394



1 Songs of thank - ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to Thee we raise,
2 Man - i - fest at Jor-dan's stream, Proph - et, Priest, and King su-preme;
3 Man - i - fest in mak-ing whole Pal - sied limbs and faint - ing soul;
4 Sun and moon shall dark-ened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;
5 Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Pres - ent in Thy ho - ly Word—



Man - i - fest-ed by the star To the sa - ges from a - far,
And at Ca - na wed - ding guest In Thy God-head man - i - fest;
Man - i - fest in val - iant fight, Quell - ing all the dev - il's might;
Christ will then like light - ning shine, All will see His glo-rious sign;
Grace to im - i - tate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;



Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem In Thy birth at Beth - le - hem:
Man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, Chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;
Man - i - fest in gra - cious will, Ev - er bring - ing good from ill;
All will then the trum - pet hear, All will see the Judge ap - pear;
That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
Thou by all wilt be con-fessed, God in man made man - i - fest.
And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807–85, alt.

*Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–93
Text and tune: Public domain*

President's Piece for Peace

I workout regularly early in the morning. As I do, I turn on the television and watch the news. I either catch up on the events of the day before or am informed about the events to come. Lately there has been a commercial on one of the channels I watch featuring a rather well-known TV evangelist. He makes a public appeal to the need for Jesus. He does it in the form of a prayer he expects the listeners to pray along with him or at least repeat it after him.

In that prayer are these words; "I have made a mess of my life, things are not going well, I have failed in so many things. I need help Jesus." At first that might sound fairly pious, but it is one-directional as to the need for Jesus. It focuses on problems in people's lives rather than *the problem* for which Jesus came into the flesh. What about those whose lives are not in a mess? What about the man or woman who is quite successful financially in a worldly way? What about those who have not failed in family and business?

The problem for which Jesus came into the flesh was not to restore what we have broken within personal relationships, business dealings, house and home trials and messes. Jesus came into our flesh because our flesh is dying from the day we are conceived. No amount of money, success, or worldly honor can remove the stain and corruption of sin. There is no doubt about the fact that sin leaves us in a mess. And there no other conclusion than that before God the Father we have failed in our attempts at righteousness. The problem with the television commercial prayer is that it leaves us to believe Jesus only came for those who recognize their mess.

Jesus did not come to save only those who are humbled by their mess, He also came for those who don't know they are in a mess. Jesus took on the flesh of all humanity and was born for the sake of redeeming all humanity. His ultimate mission was to be crucified in place of the whole human race; those who despair of themselves and the self-righteous. His life, death, and resurrection was the means by which He reconciled the world with His Father. Jesus did this for all people. He had to because all people are sinners. Some are wealthy with worldly success, and others are in earthly poverty. The point is both are in a mess on the inside because both are in need of forgiveness that only Jesus could earn and bestow.

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The angel said to Joseph: "You shall call His name Jesus, for He will save his people from their sins." Jesus said to Nicodemus: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. That whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." Paul writes to the Romans: "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ." This Word is for everyone. Everyone is in a mess. The mess is not by world standards. The mess is by divine standards. It is not a matter of what we can see and possess. It is a matter of what is inside our hearts that needs to be cleansed of its unrighteousness.

Faith grasps that truth. The faith the Holy Spirit creates does not look at the newborn babe in the manger with expectations other than His holy life and precious blood which was sacrificed in my place, in my stead. By the Means of Grace, the Holy Spirit cleanses our hearts from the consequences of sin no matter how unnoticeable that may be to the world around us.

President's Piece for Peace

Jesus' birth wasn't simply so He could look like us. It was so He could become us and redeem us from the mess of sin and death. He became our mess, our failure, our filth as He paid the price to purchase us back. It is that mess that the Law confronts us with, calling us to repentance. It is that mess that the Gospel lifts us out of darkness and into His marvelous light of salvation. That is the Jesus who was born in Bethlehem, that is the Jesus we believe in by His mercy. It is that Jesus who shall return, in His flesh, to lift our flesh from the ground and gather us in His arms. Those who do not see their inner mess and have no need for a savior will be banished into perdition. The same is true of those who mourn when their living conditions are in a mess but fail to realize the real mess is in the heart of everyone by nature.

What a contrast that is. What a blessing we will not have to worry about that day when Jesus returns. Faith in His Son, created and sustained by the Holy Spirit, looks forward to His return. It will come in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye. In an instant, we shall be body and soul resting in the mansion prepared for us before the world began. "Born to us this day, in the City of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President



Thank you to everyone at Immanuel who donated to the MICA Food and Personal Care Drive!

We gave 352 items weighing 316 pounds to MICA!

The staff at MICA and many fellow citizens are very appreciative of your generosity.

Thanks to Darlo & Dianna Kelting and
Roger & June Routier
for boxing and delivering these items!

The Board of Evangelism

Dianna K.

June R.

Bev H.

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca



December/January

What's Next?

Registration

As 2025 comes to a close, we have begun planning and preparing for summer of 2026! We are excited to announce our theme of *Free to Serve*, focusing on Jesus' vocations and how that affects our approach to vocations in our daily lives. This theme will be taught during each session of camp this summer. Registration for summer camp will open on **January 19th, 2026** with the first day of summer camp being **June 10, 2026**! We hope to see you this summer!

Coming Soon! Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca Auxiliary Board

At Camp, we are always looking for ways to advance our mission of promoting and providing Christ-centered education, recreation, and inspiration for individuals and groups of all ages. Our newest way of doing this is with the creation of a Camp Auxiliary Board. Beginning January 1st, we will be looking for representatives from each congregation in Iowa District East to be a part of the Auxiliary Board. If you are interested in supporting Camp in this way, we would be happy to have you! We look forward to providing more information soon!



IDE Middle School Retreat (and Snowlympics!) January 30-31

The 2026 IDE Middle School Retreat and Snowlympics are scheduled for January 30-31 with **Pastor Thomas Van Hemert** of St. John Lutheran Church, Marengo presenting on *All About Worship: Why Do We Do What We Do?* Visit <https://lcmside.org/msretreat/> for more information and to register!



SUMMER 2026 Theme: Free to Serve

Registration will open at 1:00pm on January 19th!

3271 Sandy Beach Road NE, Solon, IA 52333

phone 319.848.4187

web www.campiodiseca.org

email office@iodiseca.org



Confirmation

MEMORY WORK SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

5th & 6th Grades Memory Work

January 7 Third Article and Meaning

January 14 Third Article and Meaning

January 21 Third Article and Meaning

January 28 Third Article and Meaning

7th & 8th Grades Memory Work

January 7 Baptism: Part IV and Meaning

January 14 Confession: *What is Confession? What sins should we confess? Which are these?*

January 21 Confession: *What is Confession? What sins should we confess? Which are these?*

January 28 Office of the Keys: *What is the Office of the Keys? Where is this written? What do you believe according to these words?*



Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.

Poweshiek County Family Development Center

Immanuel Lutheran Church
lcms.immanuelgrinnell@gmail.com

January, 2026

Dear Friends at Immanuel Lutheran Church,

Happy New Year, 2026!

THANK YOU for your donation in **December, 2025** of **316 pounds** to Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc. (MICA) Poweshiek County Emergency Food Pantry. From your help, we were able to provide food and other necessities to **297** households giving **429** boxes. This equaled **14,500** pounds! THANK YOU for your donation to help make these food boxes possible.

Through 2025, MICA has been honored to be the recipient of many wonderful donations. These donations have helped so many in our community and county put food on the table feeding various family members.

- From January – December, 2025, you donated **101,019 pounds** to the MICA Emergency Food Pantry.
- An average of 325 households were served each month with
- An average of 453 boxes/bags given each month. (Recipients can receive boxes twice a month).
- Anywhere between 13,590 – 17,107 pounds were in those boxes/bags!

We truly appreciate your contribution because every donation helps MICA fulfill its mission: Helping People. Changing Lives. Building Communities.

Sincerely,

Mindy Clayton

Mid-Iowa Community Action Agency

FaDSS Coordinator

Poweshiek Family Development Partnership Manager

djr



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship

“And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new. Also, He said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true” (Revelation 21:5).

In January there is a great deal of “new” talk. Parties are held to ring in the “new” year. “New” year’s resolutions are made to set a “new” course of life in the “new” year. There is date forgetfulness as checks and other forms are filled out without using the “new” year on the dateline.

We use all this “new” talk because there is very often so much wrong with the old in us. We think back to the “new” resolutions from the previous year that only lasted a few weeks. That “new” person did not shed any pounds and instead, picked up a few. The “new” habits of going to the gym were soon replaced by even more time on the couch binging on Netflix. The “new” person who does not lose their temper, use sarcasm as a lethal weapon and spend more money than necessary, but who worships, prays and serves the Lord and the neighbor, never seemed to stick around. We need “new” talk because the Old Adam is alive and well within every one of us.

But this promise of “new” is a matter of stewardship. It is the Lord Himself who makes the promise of all things being new. These words recorded by St. John are not pious wishes or hopeless promises. They do what they say. YOU, that one baptized into Jesus’ death and resurrection, are NEW! These words are indeed trustworthy and true. This “new” comes to you in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It comes free of charge, even without our prayer.

This stewardship of “new” is not a vague, someday kind of stewardship either. You are NEW now! Forgiven. Reborn from above. The old is gone, nailed to Calvary’s cross and buried and rotting in a tomb that was only borrowed by Jesus for His resurrection rest. The Gospel is what makes us NEW every morning. Remembering your baptism, you are new. Confessing your sins and receiving absolution makes you new. Hearing the Gospel filling your ears makes you new. Feasting on Christ’s body and blood in the Holy Supper makes you new.

These mercies, totally undeserved as they are, are entrusted to us to steward TODAY even as we long for the Last Day. But we know how often we fail in this stewardship. We hoard God’s creation as if it belongs to us. We belittle and devalue our neighbor because they look or sound or act in a way that we do not like. We seek to make the Holy Word of God softer and more palatable for those, or even ourselves, who refuse to confess sin as sin and repent. We value our comfort over truth, our reputation over faithfulness and our treasure over making sure that people get to hear of the Jesus who has done so much for the world and us.

We, as stewards of the Gospel, need to be made new every day. This is exactly what the Lord does. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel last year, so He gives us a new year. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel yesterday, and He gives us a new day. We failed in stewardship of the Gospel in the last few minutes, and yet in mercy our newness comes with each tick of the clock! Because that is how the Lord works.

As we see this working of all new things in us, it then calls us to be stewards of this newness to the world. This starts right in our own homes. It radiates out to our neighbors. It beams out from our congregations. This newness is teamed at the circuit, district and Synod levels all to shine the newness of the Gospel to those who need it.

Your new talk starts in the newness of the Gospel. Steward this treasure in this new year and this new day. It starts with a new you in Jesus. This is indeed trustworthy and true.

DARTBALL SCHEDULE 2026
(ALL GAMES BEGIN AT 7 P.M.)
HOME TEAM LISTED FIRST

MONDAY JANUARY 5TH
WILLIAMSBURG 2-GRINNELL
MARENGO-WILLIAMSBURG 1
LINCOLN-BYE

MONDAY JANUARY 12TH
WILLIAMSBURG 2-MARENGO
GRINNELL-LINCOLN
WILLIAMSBURG 1-BYE

MONDAY JANUARY 19TH
MARENGO-GRINNELL
LINCOLN-WILLIAMSBURG 1
WILLIAMSBURG 2-BYE

MONDAY JANUARY 26TH
LINCOLN-WILLIAMSBURG 2
WILLIAMSBURG 1-GRINNELL
MARENGO-BYE

MONDAY FEBRUARY 2ND
MARENGO-LINCOLN
WILLIAMSBURG 2-WILLIAMSBURG 1
GRINNELL-BYE

MONDAY MARCH 16TH-MAKE UP NIGHT IF NEEDED

SUNDAY MARCH 22-TOURNAMENT AT LINCOLN 1 P.M. START

MONDAY FEBRUARY 9TH
GRINNELL-WILLIAMSBURG 2
WILLIAMSBURG 1-MARENGO
LINCOLN-BYE

MONDAY FEBRUARY 16TH
MARENGO-WILLIAMSBURG 2
LINCOLN-GRINNELL
WILLIAMSBURG 1-BYE

MONDAY FEBRUARY 23RD
GRINNELL-MARENGO
WILLIAMSBURG 1-LINCOLN
WILLIAMSBURG 2-BYE

MONDAY MARCH 2ND
WILLIAMSBURG 2-LINCOLN
GRINNELL-WILLIAMSBURG 1
MARENGO-BYE

MONDAY MARCH 9TH
LINCOLN-MARENGO
WILLIAMSBURG 1-WILLIAMSBURG 2
GRINNELL-BYE



JANUARY 2026

2026

IOWA PRAYER RALLY FOR LIFE



THU, FEB 5 | IOWA STATE CAPITOL

Join the Movement | 10:30 AM - 2:00 PM | Iowa State Capitol

EVERY life is precious! Join the Iowa Coalition of Pro-Life Leaders at the Iowa State Capitol for a day of prayer, education, and advocacy.

Learn to Lobby | 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM | Room TBD

Your voice matters. Veteran lobbyists will equip you with practical tools to confidently engage legislators and advocate for life-affirming policies.

Exhibitors & Pro-Life Resources | 10:45 AM - 11:45 AM | Rotunda

Connect with pro-life organizations from across Iowa offering resources, information, and meaningful ways to get involved.

Prayer Rally for Life | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM | Rotunda

Invited speakers include: Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds, Iowa Attorney General Brenna Bird, Iowa Representative Jon Dunwell, and other governmental, faith, and pro-life leaders.

Lobby Your Legislators | 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Meet with legislators to encourage, pray with, and advocate for life-affirming legislation, including: Life at Conception, Black Market Abortion, and support for mothers through the MOMS Bill.

**COALITION OF
PROLIFE
LEADERS** | Stronger Together