



**IMMANUEL'S
INSIGHTS
December 2025**



FREE CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Christian Recording Artist

RACHEL SCOTT

Live in Concert

Saturday, December 6 at 6:30

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Harlan, Iowa



Rachel has been singing professionally for over two decades, and with her band has toured through much of the Upper Midwest. She has opened for such headliners as Hillsong London, Michael W. Smith, Sara Groves, and Rebecca St. James. Immanuel is looking forward to joining you and others in what will be a joyful celebration of our Savior's birth. May he dwell richly within you this Christmas.

PEACE AND JOY TO YOU IN CHRIST!

Dear Friends in Christ,

Happy Holidays! That has become a standard December greeting in the United States. We have become a culture so afraid of the name of Christ that we don't dare to use the word "Christmas" publicly. The name of Christ has always made people nervous. People feel free to talk about God because everybody can define God any way they like. But to talk about Christ is to claim that the true God entered human history in the person of his Son. Wishing someone a Merry Christmas does run the risk of offending a few people because you are telling them that you believe the true God is the One who revealed Himself in the person of Jesus.

I think it is a good thing that some atheists and others are recognizing that Christmas is not just a meaningless winter holiday. Christmas is the celebration of God's invasion into our world. I wish all Christians took Christmas as seriously as some atheists do.

A few secularists have declared war on Christmas. We shouldn't be surprised. December 25 was an old pagan holiday before the ancient Church redeemed the day for the celebration of the Mystery of the Incarnation. Now the world wants that old holiday back. Puritans and Pilgrims thought we should give December 25 back to the world. However, most of us Christians don't want to give Christmas back. It is one time of the year when the world looks at Jesus and wonders "what if it is true?"

Some Christians are offended when people wish them "Happy Holidays." They feel like the world is trying to erase Christmas. But someone suggested that when someone wishes you "happy holidays," we should smile and say, "Thank you. And what holiday do you celebrate?" That response invites someone into a spiritual conversation and opens up an opportunity for them to ask you about what holiday you celebrate. You can then tell them about God's gift of love in Jesus. You can't be offending them because they are the one who brought up the holiday (or holy day) in the first place.

Christmas is the celebration of the Incarnation, the Word of God becoming human. I am grateful that it has infiltrated our culture like a secret agent waiting to draw people into the wonder of God's amazing grace. Every year I hope that this Christmas will be the time when people discover the wonderful gift of God in Jesus our Christ.

Our whole purpose as the Church is to share Christ with our neighbors and with the whole world. As we invite folks to worship with us this Christmas, we are sharing the real gift of Christmas with our world. So, I wish you a Merry Christmas. I wish the whole world a Merry Christmas.

Yours in Christ, *Phil Nielsen*

Worship in December 2025

December 6-7 Advent 2	"A Word from Malachi"	Communion
December 13-14 Advent 3	Advent/Christmas Choir Cantata	
December 20-21 Advent 4	"An Unexpected Christmas"	Children's Pageant
December 24 (4:00 and 6:00) Christmas Eve Candlelight	"Face to Face with God"	Choir & Bells at 4:00 Communion
December 28 1 st Sunday of Christmas	Guest preacher	

December Birthdays

Marlene Sondergaard will be 95 on December 1

Jonne Carlsen will be 86 on December 5

Judith Chickering will be 86 on December 28

Joan Lauritsen will be 89 on December 29

Ken Hursey will be 88 on December 30



Reid and Linda Mosher
will celebrate 50 years on
December 27

Congratulations to Justin and Callie (Wiltse) Retallic (Daughter of Scott and Jean Whitfield) who were married on November 15 at Immanuel.

Our Sympathy to the Marvel Jacobsen Family. Marvel passed away on October 28.

Our Sympathy to the Anne Hein Family. Anne passed away on October 26. She is the Mother of Diana Greve



**Church Office will be closed
on December 25-26 for
Christmas and January 1,
2026 for New Year's Day**

OUR PRAYER LIST: Doris Rasmussen, Sherry Lytle, Ellie Nelson, Ruthe & Pat Pattison, Phil Smith, Arlynn Gittins, Kayla Weis, Kay Koos, Connie & Ed Benson, Dan Abendroth (Sandy Sisson's brother), Dave Burmeister (Sue Olson's son-in-law), Weneraya (Steven Lewo's daughter), Lindsay Beatty (Brother in Law of Todd & Angie Madsen), Phyllis Miller (Mother of Julie Vorm), Alice Smith (Aunt of Diana Greve), Waylon Heth (Friend of Dave and Diana Greve).

Opportunities to

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Celebrate the Season:

December 3 "Deck the Halls": Join us at **6:30** as we decorate the church building for Advent and Christmas. Potluck soup will be shared.

December 6 "Christmas Tea": 10:00

December 6 "Christmas Concert with Rachel Scott": Join us at **6:30** for an evening of music, stories, and fellowship. **We are looking for people to donate cookies or bars for refreshments during the intermission of the concert. Please sign up in the church office.**

December 7 6:30 "Christmas Concert with Rachel Scott" at Immanuel in Kimballton:

December 21 "Caroling": We will get together at **10:30** in the fellowship hall to go caroling for an hour to some of the homes of people on our prayer list or who have lost loved ones recently.



Jared Walters, Jesse Hansen, Christian Brownlee, Titan Coleman (Dave Pedersen's great nephew) Koby Redler (Cousin of Kevin Osborn) serving in the Iowa National Guard on deployment.

For those who would like to write to Jared Walters and Jesse Hansen and Titan their addresses are:

SPC Walters, Jared
Task Force Elkhound
D Co. I-168 IN BN
LSA Hooligan
APO AE 09316

SGT Coleman, Titan
Task Force Elkhound
C Co 1-168
Ebril Airbase
APO, AE 09316

SGT Jesse Hansen
TF Nyala, 2/34 IBCT
APO, AE 09330



Tanzanian Happenings



As of this writing Immanuel finished drilling well #13 which is located at the Kidugala Bible School. This Bible school is well respected throughout the Southern Diocese of Tanzania and beyond for providing quality education for evangelists and pastors. The evangelist program is a Swahili taught 3-year curriculum, and the pastoral program is an English taught 4-year program. For years this institution has struggled with a reliable source of quality water. On Immanuel's last trip in August that became even more evident. Thanks to the continued support of Immanuel's members and friends of Immanuel over the long haul and a couple of recent contributions to the well drilling projects, this well is becoming a reality. Even though the location evaluation and the actual drilling have been completed it will take some time for the pump installation, tower and infrastructure to be completed. Our friends in Kidugala especially at the school are excited and grateful that Immanuel is supporting them in providing quality water for the school, student housing and vocational training for the students.

Mungu Akubariki (God Bless you all)

TZ Team



Christmas Gift Idea: Do you have a person on your Christmas list that you need an idea for a gift? How about helping an orphan in Kidugala with a uniform for school? For a donation of \$25, an orphan can have a uniform or for a \$45 donation, an orphan can have a uniform and school fees for a year. Christmas cards are available to give to the recipient about the gift in their name. These cards are available in the church office. Checks can be made out to ILC Tanzania. Thank you for your support.

Pies for the Holidays! The Tanzania Team has been busy making pies. They will be available after church or ask in the church office during *the week*. *Apple, cherry, or rhubarb for \$14 a pie. All proceeds go to fund the orphans in Kidugala to attend school. Immanuel is currently funding around 160 primary school orphans and over 200 secondary school orphans. Thank you for the support.*



NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

The Immanuel Council met November 4 with 10 of 12 members present. John Taggs led devotions. December devotions will be led by Vicki Strissel.

Treasurer's Report: October income was \$24,117.99 and expenses were \$24,879.33 for a loss of \$761.34. YTD income is \$262,085.80 and expenses are \$229,566.86 for a net income of \$32,518.94 (which includes \$20,053 in unspent refugee food aid.) General fund balance is \$130,671.93. Capital savings balance is \$84,762.14.

Worship/Evangelism: We have lined up Peggy Wolverton to be our guest organist for Palm Sunday 2026. In Advent we will introduce a time of silent preparation during a prelude. Pastor has proposed introducing a brief look at the catechism during worship each Sunday.

Fellowship/Education: Bonfire on October 25 had about 15 people participate. Thanks to Julie Vorm for heading up an Operation Christmas Child gift box collection. Pie Potluck will be held after the Thanksgiving Eve service on November 26. Christmas Caroling will be held after the December 21 service. There will be a game night on January 4 at 4 p.m.

Property: Recommendation is to dig up the sewer line for replacement. Will need to bring that to the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Old Business: Rachel Scott concert is scheduled for December 6th at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. They accepted the financial terms of \$1000 plus free will offering. Insurance carrier will not cover liability for a non-member to conduct classes at our building.

WORSHIP & GIVING

	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Refugee</u>
October 25-26	19 + 157 = 176	\$ 4628.00	\$50.00
November 1-2	26 + 160 = 186	\$5275.89	\$660.00
November 8-9	12 + 116 = 128	\$3158.98	\$ 0
November 15-16	23 + 139 = 162	\$3386.00	\$440.00
TZ	\$ 8060.00		
Building	\$20.00		
Operation Shoebox	\$200.00		
Food Pantry	\$700.00		
Cry Room Project	\$25.00		
Direct Deposit General	\$2002.00		



IMMANUEL'S INSIGHTS**ILCW EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES****November 12, 2025**

The ILCW Executive Board met November 12 with Sandy Nelsen, Kathy Block, Janet Johannsen, Sharon Daberkow, Sally Nairn and Julie Vorm present. Sandy called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Janet presented minutes from August meeting which were reviewed. Julie motioned to approve and Sally seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kathy reported extra expenses paid out for the bazaar were \$162.22. Income from bazaar was \$4097, sale of 2 sewing machines in the Country Store was \$50, other Country Store income was \$249 and a donation of \$50 bringing income to \$4446. Ending balance for October is \$5598.70.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: **Hospitality-**Jonell sent out 47 cards. **Community-**Sharon & committee have 18 bags ready to be delivered today. **Mission Quilters:** Four quilts are ready for delivery. MQ meet monthly last Monday of the month at **1:00 PM.**

OLD BUSINESS: **Bazaar-**Lots of great help. 144 served. Suggestions/possible changes for next year tabled.

NEW BUSINESS: **Poinsettias-**18 sold as of this date. Sally +3 helpers will set-up in sanctuary Dec 22 10 AM.

Christmas Tea: December 6, 10:00-noon. If attending, sign-up sheet on table in narthex.

ILCW Directory: Jan Applegate needs to know of any corrections as soon as possible.

ILCW CHARITY DONATIONS: Approved: West Central \$1500, Salem Home \$300, Riverside Camp \$500, Ingham Camp \$500, New Hope \$500, South Sudan (Ethiopia) Refugee Camp \$300, LC Clinic \$400.

Being no further business, Julie moved to adjourn. Sharon seconded.

Janet Johannsen, Secretary

ILCW GATHERING

Seventeen met at 9:30. Linda Peterson served delicious treats. Maggie was unable to attend so program consisted of several reminding of upcoming events: Sharon (goodie bags delivery), Elaine (Caregivers get together), Becky (Thanksgiving Eve pie potluck), Linda (Dec 6th Tea) and (Dec 14th Home for the Holidays 3:00 @Faith Family Church.) Linda also had humorous Ole & Lena happenings. Sandy asked the group where our Thank Offering should go. Kris Olson-Harmon does wonderful things for local kids. Motion by Sheryl, seconded by Elaine that Thank Offering should go to Kids at Risk for Kris to help kids needing assistance with many things. Motion carried. Vicki Carstens led an interactive game of 52 Card Shuffle which was fun. We learned of others' Thanksgiving traditions as we exchanged groups throughout by the card you held. She also read a poem by Mike Smith. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

NO GATHERING IN DECEMBER. NEXT GATHERING WILL BE JANUARY 14, 2026.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY 2026!

ILCW CHRISTMAS TEA Presents: A Winter Wonderland Wedding Dress Review

Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 10:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. There is no admission, we just ask that you sign up by the office area for that morning. There will be wedding dresses from the past to the present. Immanuel women will be modeling for your enjoyment with a “write-up” on each person’s wedding gown and a special “event” that happened on that person’s wedding day. It should prove to be an enjoyable, “memory lane” event and we hope you’ll plan to attend. (questions: see Linda Mosher)

“Home for the Holidays” community chorus will once again be performing this year. Performance will be on December 14th at Faith Family Church, 3:00. (Questions: contact Linda

THANK YOU to Julie Vorm and Friends for organizing and caring for “Operation Christmas Child!” Because of your hard work and generosity, we were able to fill 75 boxes this year. We’re so grateful for everyone who donated, packed, and supported this effort. Your kind-

THANK YOU for you prayers, memorials, flowers and acts of kindness. We appreciate your love and support on the passing of our mom & grandmother. Thank you for demonstrating Christ’s love. Dave, Diana Greve and Family.

CARGIVERS COMPASS

Since launching, our Caregivers Compass Support Group we have built a vibrant community, offering a safe and compassionate space for members to connect and find support. If you would like to join us, our next meeting will be Tuesday, December 9 at 9:30. Contact: Elaine Miller 712-579-0925, Joyce Folley 712-579-1837, or Jan Applegate 712-579-2160 with any questions.





Immanuel
Lutheran Church
LCMC
1700 19th Street
Harlan, IA 51537

NON-PROFIT ORG

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

HARLAN, IOWA 51537

PERMIT NO. 97

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Office: 712-755-5207

Office Hours: 9-2(M-F)

Office Email: ilc@fmctc.com

Pastor Phil's Cell Number: 712-579-2098

Home Number: 712-766-3178

E-mail: peacephillip@gmail.com

www.harlanimmanuel.org



Staff:

Pastor Phil Nielsen

Office Manager: Diana Greve

Custodian: Slava Aleev

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	AM Christmas Tea Setup 3	4	5	6
		9:00 CF Quilters 5:45 The Chosen 6:00-9:00 Scout District 6:00 Worship Comm	1:00 GROW Rehearsal 4:00 Women's Bible Study No Confirmation 5:15 Bells 6:30 LYO 6:30 "Deck the Hall" and Potluck Supp	AM Christmas Tea Setup 9:30-3:30 WIC 6:00 Men's Bible Study	AM Christmas Tea Setup	10:00 ILCW Christmas Tea 5:00 Communion 6:30 Rachel Scott Concert-Immanuel Harlan
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship/JAM 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class 5:00 Scouts 6:30 Rachel Scott Concert-Immanuel Kimballton		9:00 CF Quilters 9:30 Caregivers Compass 5:45 The Chosen 6:30 Executive Board 7:00 Church Council	3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Study 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	6:00 Men's Bible Study		5:00 Worship
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship/JAM 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class 3:00 Home for the Holidays-Faith Family 5:00 Scouts		9:00 CF Quilters 5:45 The Chosen	3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Study 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 9:30-3:30 WIC 6:00 Men's Bible Study 6:30 Ladies Homestead		5:00 Worship
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Christmas Caroling	NO SCHOOL 1:00 Mission Quilters	NO SCHOOL 9:00 CF Quilters	 CHRISTMAS EVE 4:00 Communion 6:00 Communion	 OFFICE CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY	NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED 5:00 Bruck-Riley Rehearsal	4:00 Bruck-Riley Wedding No Evening Worship
28	29	30	31			
9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Fellowship NO ADULT BIBLE CLASS	NO SCHOOL	NO SCHOOL 9:00 CF Quilters	NO SCHOOL			

Worship and Fellowship Servants Schedule December 2025-January 2026

	December 24 (4:00)	December 24 (6:00)	December 27-28	January 3-4	January 10-11
Acolytes	Truman Kjergaard Pyper Montgomery		Harper Petsche Leah Svendsen	Cora Clay Will Chipman	Trinity Haas Gavin Herbst
Saturday Greeter/Usher			Al & Bonnie Ickes	Kirk Jacobsen	Gayl & Dalton Jensen
Saturday Altar Guild				Sandy Nelsen	
Sunday Greeters/Usher	Craig & Sandy Sisson		Mark & Nancy Schmitz	Lee & Brittany Schoof	Winter & Baleigh Sette
Sunday Altar Guild	Cora Chapman Samantha Allen	Kathy Block Peg Haas		Janet Johannsen Donna Nelson	
Scripture Reader (Sunday)	Jennifer Booth	Elaine Miller	Linda Mosher	Sandy Nelsen	Donna Nelson
Communion Servers (Sunday)	Rick & Cheryl Chipman			Jan Applegate Dave Greve	
Coffee Hosts (Sun)			Rick & Cheryl Chipman	Duane & Vickie Errett	Larry & Peg Haas
Sound	DeAnn Nielsen		DeAnn Nielsen		
Video	Rick Chipman		Rick Chipman		
Projection	Teri Johnson (Wed.)	Teri Johnson (Wed.)	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat) Teri Johnson (Sun)
Council Person	Vicki Strissel	Kirk Jacobsen	John Taggs	John Taggs	Dave Greve