

Faith
IN GOD
changes
EVERYTHING

IMMANUEL'S INSIGHTS JANUARY 2024

The Lord
is near
to All who
call on
Him.
Psalm 145:18



2024 Annual Congregational Meeting

All confirmed members and interested guests are invited to attend the Immanuel Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 28. It is an opportunity to learn about what goes on behind the scenes at Immanuel and to talk about where Immanuel is headed. The meeting will take place in the Fellowship Hall at 10:15 a.m. Our agenda includes elections and approval of the 2024 Spending Plan.

15th Annual Danish Dolls


Aebelskiver/Frikadeller Dinner

Mark your calendars, folks! You won't want to miss the Danish Dolls' 15th Annual Aebelskiver/Frikadeller Dinner that will take place on Saturday, February 3, 2024 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The bake sale will feature lots of Danish goodies – not necessarily good for your waistline, but sure good for your taste buds! All freewill donations for the dinner and bake sale will go into the travel scholarship fund. These funds will help those that want to be part of a mission trip either going to, or coming from, Tanzania. Dine-in and carry-out will be available. Hope to see you on February 3rd!



Worship in January

January 6-7 Epiphany 1	Greatest Sermon: Secret Christians Matthew 6:1-18	Communion
January 13-14 Epiphany 2	Greatest Sermon: The Power of Money Matthew 6:19-24	
January 20-21 Epiphany 3	Greatest Sermon: Birds and Blooms Matthew 6:25-34	Communion
January 27-28 Epiphany 4	Greatest Sermon: Logs and Sawdust Matthew 7:1-6	



A WORD
FROM THE
PASTOR

Dear Friends in Christ,

How many members does your church have? Has anybody ever asked you that question? I get that question every once in a while. And I'm never quite sure how to answer. Officially, we reported 631 members in our annual report. But is that really a true answer?

What does it mean to be a member of a church? At least one church in our community says they don't have members. So, what do they have? If the people who attend worship at their church are not members, what are they? Religious consumers? Clients? Just an audience?

Where did the idea of church membership come from? The word "member" originally referred to a part of a body. To be dismembered meant to lose an important part of one's body. The New Testament used the word "membership" to talk about how Christians relate to one another in the Church. We are connected to one another as functioning members of the Body of Christ.

These days many younger Americans resist the idea of committing to groups as members. All kinds of social organizations are seeing their memberships decline. Some would suggest that this is exactly why the Church should continue to push the idea of membership because Jesus calls us to make a commitment to one another as the Body of Christ. We are not just church consumers or church shoppers. We are members of the Body of Christ. And if we refuse to make a membership commitment to a particular congregation, we are saying to the body, I don't need you and you don't need me.

There are many non-denominational churches that have abandoned the idea of church membership. However, the consequences of abandoning formal membership are troubling. For one, it just feeds into the consumer mentality of many American church shoppers. They go to church only for what they can get out of it, without any thought of giving, sharing, or serving.

Secondly, it means that the leadership of a church is accountable to no one. The pastor and the board don't have members holding them accountable. Church leaders just live in their own echo chamber shaping the church to their liking without real input from a committed and diverse Body of Christ.

Perhaps churches are abandoning the idea of membership because they see how careless and superficial membership has become in many churches, just a formality with no real commitment or accountability. Unfortunately, any time a congregation gets over 400 members, it becomes difficult to keep track of everyone. Records get mixed up.

That is true at Immanuel. We find that some people who think they are members of Immanuel are not on our roster of members. We also have heard from some people listed on our membership roster that they have never been a member at Immanuel. The membership list has become a list of names without real meaning. It is any wonder that some churches have given up on keeping membership lists?

Then we have "The Great Resignation" to factor in. That is what people have called the past few years as many Baby Boomers have retired early and others have quit their jobs looking for new callings and new directions. It seems that the Great Resignation has also hit many congregations including ours. Our church, like many others, was closed for two months in 2020 and a good number of members have never returned. Some have joined other churches and never told us. Others just got into the habit of staying home. Others have decided they don't need the Church.

So how many members does Immanuel really have? In reality, it doesn't matter whether we have 300 or 600 or 900. The number doesn't really change how we operate. We do weddings and funerals for anyone who is looking for Lutheran ministry. We welcome anyone to participate in our worship and life together whether they are members or not. Still, I would like to be able to give a curious outsider or a prospective member a more accurate answer. I hope to have some good conversations about this in 2024.

Yours in Christ, *Phil Nielsen*



Happy Birthday to the following:

Joanne Christensen will be 92 on January 3.
 Kay Havick who will be 81 on January 4.
 Bruce Havick will be 82 on January 13.
 Elaine Miller who will be 81 on January 13.
 Jerald Wigness will be 84 on January 26.



OUR SYMPATHY to Kirk Jacobsen and his family at the death of Pam Jacobsen Sunday, December 10. Her funeral was here at Immanuel on Saturday, December 16.



MEAL TRAIN has been organized for Vicki Strissel, as she is going in for major surgery on her neck.. If you would like to contribute a meal you can call the church office at 712-755-5207. Or you can go online through the internet website <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/41k7gm>

MEAL TRAIN has been organized for Jason and Kayla Weis again. Kayla will be going in for surgery. If you would like to contribute a meal you can call the church office at 712-755-5207. Or you can go online through the internet website <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/w96er0>



THANK YOU for the gift of special ornaments made from the stops for the organ and the picture frames made from the pipe. They are so special! Thank you for the honor of being the first to play the new organ. God Bless You! *Marge Ahrenholtz*



WORSHIP SERVICES at Immanuel are streamed on Facebook (www.facebook.com/ilcharlan) Sunday mornings. They are also recorded for viewing on HMU channel 15 (9:30 a.m. Sunday and 5:00 p.m. Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday) and on FMCTC channel 48 (4:00 p.m. Wednesday). Our worship is also posted on www.harlanimmanuel.org/sermons.html.



Larry Haas and the Tanzania Committee would like to acknowledge and thank the following:

- Nelson Farm Supply** for allowing us use part of their facility to count cans and bottles.
- Dave Greve, Galan Johannsen, Ken Vorm, and Ken Olson** for helping in various ways (count, deliver, etc.).
- Tyson Haas** for supplying his pickup for deliveries.
- Chipman Farms** for supplying their trailer for deliveries.

Milestone Reached in 2023
Those nickels add up!!!



Over 200,000 redeemable cans and bottles were donated, counted, and delivered in 2023! This gives Immanuel's Tanzania Committee **\$10,000** to support orphans, develop agriculture, complete well projects, distribute Bibles, award high school scholarships, etc., in the Kidugala area.

We continue to encourage everyone to collect redeemable cans and bottles and drop them off in the cage at the back of the church. What is deposited there is collected, counted, and then delivered to the Atlantic Redemption Center. This past year nine trip were made to the redemption center. The most in one load was 24,595 pieces, and the smallest load was 20,655 pieces.

The success of this project would not be possible without you, as well as the generosity of the surrounding community. Thank you!

OUR PRAYER LIST: Vicki Strissel, Allan Andersen, Arlynn Gittens, Ken Vorm, Judy Pedersen, Lorene Thiede, Richard Daberkow, Julie Vorm, Kayla Weis, Sandra Haney, Connie Benson, Bill Broveak (son-in-law of Ed & Sheila Mills), Wade Mills (son of Ed & Sheila Mills), Curt Olson (son of Sue Olson), Julie Duval, Grace Pauley, Margie Schenck, Sandy Hopper (Joey Hansen's mother), Josh Pedersen (son of Dave & Judy Pedersen), Melvin and Helen Allen (Steve Allen's parents), Megan Leslie (Steve Allen's niece).





DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

The Immanuel Church Council met December 11 of 13 members and one guest present.

Joey Hansen led devotions reflecting on miracles he experienced in the past few months. He read from John 9. January devotions will be led by Craig Olson.

Treasurer: November income was \$18,207 and expenses were \$20,198. General Fund balance on December 1 was \$78,323. Capital Savings Account is at \$66,080. Organ Fund is at \$28,517. TZ Account is at \$31,951.

Worship/Evangelism: The organ is completed. All that remains is the programming for the computer interface which should be completed by December 24. Pipe organ dedication is set for February 11. Discussed a special arrangement for our celebration of Maundy Thursday in March. We have some young people who have agreed to sit on the committee this coming year.

Fellowship/Education: Immanuel's Got Talent is scheduled for January or February.

Outreach/Stewardship: Our January Mission Partner is LCMC. Food pantry donations are at 1037 pounds. Volunteer thank-you cards were distributed, written, and delivered in November. Tanzania Well #10 is flowing. Pies were made and sold. Still rhubarb remaining. Doc Strissel's seed corn is on the way to Tanzania. All is well in the Sharing Cupboard.

Property: Outdoor decorations were put up thanks to Vance Arnold, Greg, and Ken. Fire alarm system was inspected. Mower is being serviced for next year.

Executive: Recommended proposed 2024 budget of \$303,450 (5 % increase). Motion carried. Still pursuing candidates for next year's election. Pastor has phone interviews scheduled with 3 applicants for the office administrator position.

Pastor's Report: Recommended Matt and Mary Hoch and Hazel for membership at Immanuel. Pastor will introduce thoughts about membership renewal at annual meeting, but no action will be taken until 2025.

WORSHIP & GIVING

	<u>Attendance</u>			<u>General</u>	<u>Building</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dec. 2-3	19	+	136 = 155	\$ 4,882.68	\$ 25.00	\$ 4,907.68
Dec. 9-10	39	+	118 = 157	\$ 4,689.00	\$	\$ 4,689.00
Dec. 16-17	13	+	178 = 191	\$ 8,514.25	\$	\$ 8,514.25
Dec. 23-24	29	+	420 = 449	\$ 12,256.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 13,256.00



ILCW EXECUTIVE BOARD

December 18, 2023

The ILCW Executive Board met Monday, December 18 at 9:00 AM in the home of Sharon Daberkow. Present were Sandy, Kathy, Janet, Sharon, Sally, Jean and Julie. Sandy called meeting to order at 9:30.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The minutes reviewed with no corrections. Motion to approve by Jean, seconded by Sally.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kathy reported \$885 Thank Offering was received. Stamps purchase of \$132. Motion by Janet, seconded by Sharon to pay bill for 27 poinsettias.

CORRESPONDENCE: Thank You messages received from those receiving Fall Goodie Bags are on the ILCW bulletin board.

COMMITTEES: Hospitality: Cards sent included Sympathy 1, Get Well 28, Birthday 14, Valentine's 30, Easter 35, Halloween 32, Thanksgiving 36 and Christmas 36 for total of 212. Thank You Jonelle! It's much appreciated by those being remembered by Immanuel.

Kitchen: Jean has stocked up on coffee and will check cup supply.

Mission Quilters: Time change to 1:00 for the winter months. Still meeting last Monday of each month.

OLD BUSINESS: THANK YOU LINDA MOSHER for planning such an interesting program for the Christmas Tea. Thank you also to all the helpers baking, setting up and serving. Many comments have been received from attendees on the lovely program.

NEW BUSINESS: Decorating the sanctuary with 27 poinsettias that were sold will be Friday, Dec 22 @10:15.

Thank offering: Motion by Julie seconded by Sharon to forward \$885 to Kris Olson-Harmon for Kids at Risk. Ayes all.

2024 Budget: After review of past years' budgeted usage, the 2024 budget was set at: Church Youth Assistance \$1200; Mission Quilting \$300; Birthdays/Bingo \$100; Hospitality/Cards \$150; Kitchen Supplies \$400; Christmas Tea \$300; and Flowers/Misc \$190.

2023 MONIES DISTRIBUTION: At year end Kathy will issue checks totaling \$5000 to the following: West Central (Fareway meat certificates) \$2000; Salem Home Activities \$500; Ingham Okoboji Bible Camp \$500; Riverside Bible Camp \$500; New Hope Village in Carroll \$500; Feed My Starving Children \$500 and Life Change Clinic in Atlantic \$500.

ILCW DIRECTORY: Jan Applegate is updating. A new Mission Statement was voted on by the Board and included.

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM.

Next board meeting: January 10 @9:00 AM. ILCW Gathering will follow at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall.

Janet Johannsen, Secretary

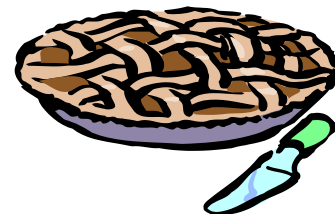


ILCW (Immanuel Lutheran Church Women) will gather in the fellowship hall Wednesday, January 10th at 9:30 AM. Join us for great fellowship and an interesting program, "A Little History of Feed Sacks". **YOU** may have your own story about feed sacks to share also. There were many different uses. Good Lutheran refreshments are always served. Hope to see you there.



WE WELCOMED KORI KATE PETERSEN into the family of Jesus on November 19, 2024 through the promise of Baptism. Kori is the daughter of Dylan and Katie Petersen and the sister of Jack and Tyler. She was born June 29, 2023 in Atantic. Her sponsors are Kari Palmer and Josh Travis.

TANZANIA HAPPENINGS



THE TANZANIA GROUP is selling rhubarb pies for \$14. Pies will be available after church services or anytime during the week at the church, check with the church office. Proceeds will support orphans and other projects with Kidugala.



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: 755-5207
Office Hours: 9-1(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: Connie Boysen
Custodian: Slava Aleev

JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 9:00 Worship 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class	1	2 9:00 CF Quilters 6-9:00 Boy Scouts 6pm Worship Com	3 3:30 GROW 5:15 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	4	5	6 5:00 Communion
7 9:00 Communion/Jam 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class 5:00 Boy Scouts 7:00 Boy S Leaders	8 5:00 Shelby Co. Univ. Women	9 9:00 CF Quilters 2:00 Bunco 6:30 Executive Bd 7:00 Church Council	10 9 ILCW Bd Mtg. & 9:30 ILCW Gathering 3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible 5:15 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	11	12	13 5:00 Worship
14 9:00 Worship/Jam 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class 5:00 Boy Scouts	15	16 9:00 CF Quilters 7pm Fellowship & Ed. Comm.	17 3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible 5:15 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	18 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 Ladies Homestead	19	20 5:00 Communion
21 9:00 Communion/Jam 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Adult Bible Class 5:00 Boy Scouts	22	23 9:00 CF Quilters 2:00 Bunco	24 3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible 5:15 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	25 Assemble Newsletter	26	27 5:00 Worship
28 9:00 Worship/Jam 10:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:15 Congregational Mtg. 5:00 Boy Scouts	29 1:00 Mission Quilters	30 9:00 CF Quilters	31 3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible 5:15 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	1	2	3 5:00 Communion

Worship and Fellowship Servants Schedule

	January 20-21	January 27-28	February 3-4	February 10-11	February 14
Acolytes	Trevor Herbst Gavin Herbst	Aubrey Petsche Katie Stern	Will Chipman Kolton Jensen	Jace Palmer Cade Neve	Gavin Sisson Abby Brue
Saturday Greeter/Usher	Linda Peterson	Orvetta Priest	Terry Saunders	Shelly Saunders	
Saturday Altar Guild	DeAnn Nielsen		Sandy Nelsen		
Sunday Greeters/Ushers	Mark & Kristah Nelson Preston & Shelby Nelson	Verne & Ilene Nelson Erik Nielsen	Wayne Nelson Mindy & Owen Neve	Jay & Susie Nielsen Neil & Melanie Ohms	
Sunday Altar Guild	Erin Hastert Donna Nelson		Stacy Torneten Vicki Strissel		
Scripture Reader (Sunday)	Tim Herbst	Kayla Jacobs	Janet Johannsen	Mary Johnson	Jennifer Malone
Communion Servers (Sunday)	George & Jan Applegate		Kathy Block Dave Greere		
Coffee Hosts (Sunday)	Linda Norgaard Kris Olson-Harmon	Craig & Jodi Olson	Karma Petersen Linda Peterson	Lavera Stern, Angel & Katie	
Sound	Alan Ahrenholtz	Alan Ahrenholtz	Seth Johannsen	Seth Johannsen	Seth Johannsen
Video	Christopher Chapman	Christopher Chapman	Grant Chipman	Grant Chipman	Grant Chipman
Projection	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen (Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen(Sat.) Teri Johnson (Sun.)	Cheryl Nielsen(Sat.)
Council Person	Vick Strissel	Rich & Barb Furst	John Taggs	Scott Shannon	