



# IMMANUEL'S INSIGHTS January 2026



## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Danish Dolls Aebelskiver/Frikadeller Dinner

Mark your calendar and take a night off from cooking! You won't want to miss the Danish Dolls' 17<sup>th</sup> annual Aebelskiver/Frikadeller Dinner and Bake Sale on Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at Immanuel (carry-out will be available). The bake sale always features lots of Danish goodies! All freewill donations from the event will go into the travel scholarship fund. These funds help those who take part in mission trips either going to, or coming from, Tanzania.

Bring your friends and your appetite, and we'll see you on January 24th!



## Fellowship Game Night

On the 11<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas, my true love said to me, "Let's get together at the Church and share some snacks and play some games." Bring a favorite game to play or come and learn a new game. Board games, party games, card games, and just plain old fun are the order for the evening. We start at 4:00 p.m. and go until the last one is done.



## **CAREGIVERS 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, January 13 at 9:30. Contact: Elaine Miller 712-579-0925, Joyce Foley 712-579-1837, or Jan Applegate 712-579-2160 with any questions.

## FROM THE *Pastor's Desk*

Dear Friends in Christ,

What a gift it is to have a community of faith with whom to celebrate the wonder and beauty of Christmas, the gift of Jesus! Christmas in the Church always feels kind of like a homecoming when we see family and friends that are home for Christmas. And there is a great joy being in a room full of people singing songs that we all know and love. It was a great pleasure to have a choir of over 20 members singing the message of Christmas on December 14.

And it is always wonderful to have a group of children to share in the joy of Christmas. We had a good group of children sharing the message of Christmas on the last Sunday in Advent. I really enjoy seeing how many children have become involved in our ministry with youth and children.

In a medium-sized congregation like Immanuel, the number of children will tend to increase and decrease from year to year. When I came to Immanuel 11 years ago, we had a good number of children involved in worship and Sunday School. Then we kind of went through a valley with very few children participating. Now our numbers are stronger again. We had over 20 children involved with our Christmas program not including the younger ones who joined in on "Away in a Manger." I have a feeling we will seek peaks and valleys in the years ahead.

I am so very grateful to the adults who have been serving as leaders in our ministry with youth and children. However, as I look to the future, I think I see some changes that are needed. The way we are doing ministry now is not very sustainable. We are relying on a few adults who will not be able to sustain their current involvement indefinitely. I am thinking especially about our JAM ministry with preschoolers and first and second graders and our LYO ministry with high schoolers. We are not likely to find people willing to step in and carry the load in the same way that our current leaders have served.

Our ministry would be much more sustainable if we had teams of people willing to serve instead of just a few individuals carrying the load. That is the way youth ministry was done when I was in high school. We had several couples who served together for just a few years at a time with a new couple rotating in every year or so.

As I think about the future of JAM ministry with our little ones and LYO ministry with our older youth, I envision 3 or 4 couples with each group working together, taking turns, and showing our young people the breadth of our congregation's commitment to them. It does take a congregation (faith village) to share faith with our young people.

In 2026, I hope that we will begin to find members who are willing to join with others to take our ministry with children and youth to the next level and make it sustainable for the future. Do you know someone who would consider becoming more involved with our ministry with children and youth?

Yours in Christ, Phil Nielsen



### January Birthdays

Kay Havick will be 82 on January 4

Elaine Miller will be 82 on January 13



### **OUR PRAYER LIST:** Barbara

Sorensen, Hertha Haas, Doris Rasmussen, Sherry Lytle, Ellie Nelson, Ruthe & Pat Pattison, Phil Smith, Arlynn Gittins, Kayla Weis, Kay Koos, Connie & Ed Benson, Grace Ashdown (Randi McEvoy's sister-in-law), Dan Abendroth (Sandy Sisson's brother), Dave Burmeister (Sue Olson's son-in-law), Weneraya (Steve Lewo's daughter), Lindsay Beatty (Brother-in-Law of Todd & Angie Madsen), Phyllis Miller (Mother of Julie Vorm), Waylon Heth (Friend of Dave and Diana Greve), Marilyn Torgersen (Judi Pedersen's sister).

### Mark Your 2026 Calendar

**Church Office Closed:** January 1, for New Year's Day

January 4th, 4:00 pm-Game Night

January 25 10:30 am Annual Meeting

January 24th Aebleskiver Supper



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



## 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting

All confirmed members and interested guests are invited to attend the ILC Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 25. 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 10:30 a.m. Our agenda includes elections and approval of the 2026 Spending Plan.



**Pies for the Holidays!** The Tanzania Team has Rhubarb Pies for \$14 a pie for sale. There are No Apple or Cherry Pies Left. Ask in the church office during *the week*. *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.*

### WORSHIP & GIVING

	<u>Attendance</u>				<u>General</u>	<u>Refugee</u>
November 22-23	19	+	104	=	123	\$ 4370.00
November 29-30	0	+	62	=	62	\$1045.00
December 7-8	82	+	105	=	187	\$4760.00
December 13-14	15	+	138	=	162	\$3157.00
December 20-21	17	+	218	=	235	\$3104.00

TZ \$ 1070.00

Building \$0

Operation Shoebox \$311.00

Food Pantry \$0

Cry Room Project \$25.00

Direct Deposit General \$2405.00

Thanksgiving \$245.00

# DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY

The Immanuel Council met December 9 with 10 of 12 members present. Eric read Vicki's devotions on Advent as preparation for Jesus. Joey will lead devotions in January.

John Taggs, Amy Kaster, Eric Chipman, Scott Shannon, Joey Hansen, Kirk Jacobsen, Dave Greve, and Craig Olson volunteered for deacon duties.

**Treasurer's Report:** November income was \$21,759 and expenses were \$23,287 for a loss of \$1,528. YTD income is \$283,845 and expenses are \$252,854 for a net income of \$30,990. General fund balance is \$129,267. Capital savings balance is \$85,262. Motion carried to move \$30,000 from the general fund into a CD for up to a year.

**Worship/Evangelism:** Peggy Wolverton to be our guest organist for Palm Sunday 2026 with an organ recital following the service. In Advent we have implemented a prelude time for prayerful preparation for worship. Discussed 2-hour late start for snowy Sunday mornings. We are looking for input on how people would like to be alerted to late starts and cancellations. We will seek additional bids on the TV monitor for the new child care area. Mary Taggs is working on the design and implementation for the childcare area in the narthex.

**Fellowship/Education:** Thanks to Julie Vorm for heading up Operation Christmas Child. We doubled our boxes this year. LYO had a lock-in overnight in the church with 14 youth. Pie Potluck was held after the Thanksgiving Eve service on November 26. Thanks to Donna and Greg Nelson for putting up the tree and thanks to the rest of the decorators. Christmas caroling will be Sunday, December 21. There will be a game night on January 4 at 4 p.m.

**Outreach/Stewardship:** December Mission Partner is Lutheran Church of South Sudan.

**Property:** Property Committee really liked the 2-hour late start. Chad's Lawn Care is doing our parking lot snow removal. Thanks to Vance Arnold for providing the lift and Michael Monson for helping us replace ceiling tiles in the sanctuary. Elevate Roofing found 3 tiny holes in the roof and patched them on December 8. Clay Amadoo has given us new bids for his service. We will put him on hold. We may consider moving to vinyl flooring as an update.

**Executive:** Council agreed to honor the contract provision for severance pay for our former office administrator. Council set the date for the 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting for Sunday, January 25, at 10:30 A.M. in the fellowship hall. Annual reports are due to the church office on Monday, January 12. Nominating Committee prepared a ballot of Dave Greve, Joey Hansen, Craig Olson, and Alex Monson for church council and Gary Jahn for Trust and Memorial. Trust and Memorial Committee approved External Mission Grants of \$2500 for both West Central Community Action and for the ILC Refugee Fund. They also approved \$2000 scholarships for Jared Walters at Institute of Lutheran Theology and for a scholarship program for evangelists in Kidugala, Tanzania.

**New Business:** Council worked on the 2026 ILC Budget. Approved a Budget recommendation for the Annual Congregational Meeting.



## ILCW

**ILCW** ( Immanuel Lutheran Church Women) will be gathering **Wednesday morning, January 7th at 9:30** in the Fellowship Hall. Vicki Carstens will have the program and Myrna Havick the refreshments. How about starting 2026 with joining us once a month for fellowship with good friends and make new friends? Hope to see you there. Thank you to all who shared a fun and interesting programs in the past year and yum-my treats.

**THANK YOU** to everyone who purchased poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary at Christmas and to everyone one who gave a Thank offering for the ILCW local donation, "Kids at Risk".

**The Christmas Tea, Winter Wonderland Wedding Dress Review**, was wonderful and enjoyed by more than 80 from Immanuel and the community. Thank you, Linda Mosher for the many hours spent planning this event and all those involved.

### **SHARING CUPBOARD**

Thank you to all that have been donating to the Sharing Cupboard! We've had a lot of activity recently, and your support is truly appreciated. If you'd still like to contribute, donations can be dropped off at the office or directly at the cupboard. The office can also place grocery orders on your behalf if you prefer not to shop yourself.



## MISSION QUILTERS UPDATE

Mission Quilters has been a part of Immanuel for many many years. In 2018, I was asked by Doris Towne and Shirley Knudtsen if I would be willing to take over as they were in their late 80's and were giving it up. I was honored and said I would try. 7 years later, I am "Passing the Pins" to Jean Whitfield and Julie Vorm, Mission Quilters continue in good hands! It has been a rewarding mission to be a part of making Care and Concern quilts for our own members, as well as making and distributing them to Elm Crest (Harlan), Salem (Elk Horn) and Care Initiatives (Avoca). AS has been said before, many residents no longer have relatives to visit them or to get gifts from, so, at Christmas, our quilts become their Christmas gifts. The best part of this "mission" has been the personal deliveries made to our members and to residents at the nursing homes. We, as a group hope they feel the care and concern and love sent from Immanuel to each of them. Huge thanks to all you who have donated material and sheets over the years, and have bought our quilts at our Fall Bazaar. I know all will Continue to do. Special Thanks to our "top" makers and the gals that show up each month to put quilts together. Sincere Thanks to all who continue to support this Immanuel Mission. *Linda Mosher*



## Worship in January 2026

January 3-4 Christmas 2	Getting Ready for Jesus Mark 1:1-8	Communion
January 10-11 Epiphany 1	It Is Time Mark 1:9-15	
January 17-18 Epiphany 2	Fishing Mark 1:16-20	Communion Bells
January 24-25 Epiphany 3	Jesus vs. Evil Mark 1:21-34	Choir





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](mailto:ilc@fmctc.com)

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

Home Number: 712-766-3178

E-mail: [peacephillip@gmail.com](mailto:peacephillip@gmail.com)

[www.harlanimmanuel.org](http://www.harlanimmanuel.org)

Staff:

Pastor Phil Nielsen

Office Manager: Diana Greve

Custodian: Slava Aleev



# JANUARY 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				 <b>1</b>  OFFICE CLOSED	<b>2</b>  10:00 Pastor @ ElmCrest	<b>3</b>  5:00 Communion
9:00 Communion/JAM <b>4</b> 10:00 Fellowship Coffee 10:15 Adult Bible Class 4:00 Game Night	<b>5</b>  11:00 Shelby Co. Univ. Women(SCUW) (Sandy Nelsen) Fellowship Hall	<b>6</b>  9:00 CF Quilters 5:00-9:00 Scouts Dists 7:30 Fellowship & Ed Committee	<b>7</b>  3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Stu 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	<b>8</b>  9:00-3:30 WIC	<b>9</b>  Homeschool Game Club 5:30-8:00	<b>10</b>  5:00 Worship
<b>11</b>  8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship/JAM 10:00 Fellowship Coffee 10:15 Adult Bible Class 4:30 Scouts 5:30 Scout Leaders	<b>12</b>  <b>Annual  Reports Due</b>	<b>13</b>  9:00 CF Quilters 9:30 Caregivers Compass 10:00 Pastor @ ElmCrest 6:30 Executive Board 7:00 Church Council	<b>14</b>  9:00 ILCW Bd Mtg 9:30 ILCW Gathering 3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Stu 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	<b>15</b>  9:30 Pastor @ Salem	<b>16</b>  	<b>17</b>  5:00 Communion
<b>18</b>  8:00 Choir 9:00 Communion/JAM 10:00 Fellowship Coffee 10:15 Adult Bible Class 4:30 Scouts	<b>19</b>  	<b>20</b>  9:00 CF Quilters 10:00 Pastor @ Hansen House	<b>21</b>  3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Stu 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	<b>22</b>  9:00-3:30 WIC  NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	<b>23</b>  	<b>24</b>  Danish Dolls Aebelskiver/Frika deller Supper 5-7 5:00 Worship
<b>25</b>  8:00 Choir 9:00 Worship/JAM 10:00 Fellowship Coffee 10:30 Annual Cong. Mtg. 4:30 Scouts	<b>26</b>  :00 Mission Quilts	<b>27</b>  9:00 CF Quilters 2:00 Bunco	<b>28</b>  3:30 GROW 4:00 Women's Bible Stu 5:15 Bells 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 LYO	<b>29</b>  ASSEMBLE NEWSLETTER	<b>30</b>  Homeschool Game Club 5:30-8:00	<b>31</b>  5:00 Communion

# Worship and Fellowship Servants Schedule January 2026-February 2026

	January 17-18	January 24-25	January 31-February 1	February 7-8	February 14-15
<b>Acolytes</b>	Kolton Jensen Truman Kjergaard	Pyper Montgomery Zoey Olson	Maggie Petersen Harper Petsche	Leah Svendsen Will Chipman	Cora Clay Trinity Haas
<b>Saturday Greeter/Usher</b>	Mert & Diane Kastens	Larry Klein	Randi McEvoy	Kurt & Janelle Musfeldt	Jeff & Penny Nelson
<b>Saturday Altar Guild</b>	Cheryl Nielsen		Kayla Jacobs		Sandy Nelsen
<b>Sunday Greeters/Usher</b>	Kate Smith Kori Smith	Raymond Sorensen Stephanie Stork	Chad & Lisa Swanson	Rex Swanson Carly Torneten	Dave & Ranaye Voge
<b>Sunday Altar Guild</b>	Kate Petersen Vicki Strissel		Mary Taggs Stacy Torneten		Jan Applegate Kathy Block
<b>Scripture Reader (Sunday)</b>	Verne Nelson	DeAnn Nielsen	Craig Olson	Judi Olson	Dylan Petersen
<b>Communion Servers (Sunday)</b>	Larry Haas Taylor Hansen		Erin Hastert Mary Hoch		Tony Hansen Matt Hoch
<b>Coffee Hosts (Sun)</b>	Jeff & Erin Hastert	Matt & Mary Hoch	Galan & Janet Johannsen	Colin & Roberta King	Elaine & Jill Miller
<b>Sound</b>	Alan Ahrenholtz	Alan Ahrenholtz	Seth Johannsen	Seth Johannsen	Seth Johannsen
<b>Video</b>	Dave Greve	Dave Greve	Grant Chipman	Grant Chipman	Grant Chipman
<b>Projection</b>	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) Teri Johnson (Sun)
<b>Council Person</b>	Eric Chipman	Scott Shannon	John Taggs	Joey Hansen	Kirk Jacobsen

