

the immanuelite

celebrating 124 years of ministry

Sabbatical Thanks from Pastor Molly

Thank you, Immanuel Lutheran Church, for gifting me three months of sabbatical. I feel a renewed sense of energy and purpose. I've been back full time since November 1. Thanks to Immanuel's staff, council, and volunteers for all the good ministry you continued in my absence. It's exciting to come back and hear about high school lunches, solar panel projects, confirmation for two students, expansion of the Faith Family Gathering with Around the Table, Reconciling in Christ (RIC) welcome statement draft, WMS Flagship, lay people leading worship and much more. I feel affirmed as the pastor here at Immanuel. I'm looking forward to current and future ministry opportunities.

During the sabbatical time, I walked the Labyrinth and worshipped at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco, participated in an on-line course about Mary Magdalene, parented our children, fasted from the news cycle, focused on exercising and eating healthy, and painted several rooms in our house.



Sabbatical & Seasonal Reflections

In October, I walked a Labyrinth at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco. I didn't have any place to set my purse. It could get stolen! So, I walked the labyrinth holding it. It was heavy and distracted me. Why hadn't I just set it down! I noticed that I was completely focused on that thing and my decision to carry it with me. Soon, it became a metaphor for all the worries and unhelpful life patterns that I won't let go. Walking the Labyrinth gave me insight into what I carry and the hope that though I may not let go, or

even be able to let go, I do not carry these burdens alone. God is with me, walking alongside and carrying them with me. This is what Emmanuel, God with Us, is about at Christmas.

We all have troubles or obligations that we can't let go. Health concerns, parenting challenges, job dissatisfaction, facing the end of life, or the loss of a loved - we can't just pick up and leave those things behind. We try all kinds of coping strategies to deal with them.

The birth of the Christ child promises that God is not simply another coping strategy. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote "The Bible is full of the proclamation that the great miracle has happened as **an act of God, without any human doing**...

O Come,
O Come
Emmanuel



What happened? God had seen the misery of the world and had come himself in order to help. Now God was there, not as a mighty one, but in the obscurity of humanity, where there is sinfulness, weakness, wretchedness, and misery in the world. That is where God goes, and there, God lets himself be found by everyone... That is what God did in the beloved Son, Jesus Christ. *Ecce homo* – see the incarnate God, the unfathomable mystery of the love of God for the world. God loves human beings. God loves the world – not ideal human beings, but people as they are, not an ideal world, but the real world."

God has decided that walking with us is enough to bless and save the whole world. This season, as we journey with Mary, Joseph and the magi to manger, we may not always know where we are going, but only that God's hand is leading us and God's love supporting us.

Advent Activities

Advent & Christmas Worship at Immanuel

Journey to the Manger Advent Devotions Available on November 20

Advent Sunday Worship November 27, December 4, 11 at 10:00 AM

Immanuel Christmas Program Sunday, December 18 at 10:00 AM

Immanuel Christmas Eve Worship December 24

4 PM Band, Holy Communion, Candlelight

8 PM Organ, Holy Communion, Candlelight

Christmas Sunday Worship, December 25 at 11:00 AM

New Year's Sunday, January 1 at 11:00 AM

Community Advent Activities

IMLU Giving Tree Events start Sunday, November 27

Holden Evening Prayer (at St. Paul Lutheran)

Wednesdays at 6:30 PM Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, and 21

Faith Family Gathering & Around the Table (at Immanuel)

Sharing Christmas traditions, crafts, and food with Congolese church

Sunday, December 4 4-6:15 PM

John Hermanson Advent/Christmas Concert (at Immanuel)

Sunday, December 11, 6:30 PM Light appetizers, 7:00 PM Concert

Free will offering for scholarships for music students at Mwika Lutheran Bible and Theological College in Tanzania

Christmas Carol Singing, Sunday, December 11 4:00 pm (Holy Spirit Episcopal)

Blue Christmas Worship Sunday, December 18 4:00 p.m.

(Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Bonner)

Immanuel News and Ministries



Event Report: High School Lunch Program

By Colter Murphy

Gathering around food has been a Christian tradition since the advent of our faith. In the days of the early church, the sharing of bread and wine inside of someone's home was a reminder of Jesus and his promise of love for all. This form of worship invited the community to be part, the folks who were in the neighborhood. It is with this sincere spirit of hospitality that members of the Missoula ELCA churches have been serving free lunch to high schoolers at Immanuel Lutheran. The lunch is a warm, homemade meal right across the street from Sentinel High School and welcomes all students.

Many will remember when Amanda Nelson was Children, Youth and Family Director at St. Paul. She pioneered a vision for lunch for high schoolers during her time, and served students from Hellgate. With this memory in mind, I approached Immanuel leadership over the summer and asked them to consider hosting lunches for the folks in their neighborhood: the Sentinel students. They were open to the idea and so we collaborated to form a team of volunteers willing to cook. This team of helpers is made up of people from Immanuel, St. Paul, and Our Savior's.

It's been fun to work in the kitchen with these helpers. We cook things that are simple but delicious, and everyone brings their own cooking techniques and expertise. The meals have been complete and quite tasty. To cap off the meal, volunteers also provide tasty desserts. I'm fondly remembering a particular pineapple upside-down cake...

The students enjoy the meal and are welcomed by Colter to take part in a discussion around faith topics. So far, we've discussed the idea of "welcome" and how it relates to the story of the widow welcoming Elijah. Students seem open to

consider these ideas even if it's their first time in a church. At every lunch, they are reminded that the lunch is a space that welcomes them to express their full selves, and they are reminded that they are loved.

There are plans for two more high school lunches in January: one at Immanuel and one at St. Paul. We hope to continue to build our team of kitchen volunteers who can serve at both churches. We have already used one Thrivent Action Grant for kitchen goods and we could use another one. If you would like to volunteer at lunchtime on a Thursday, or if you are a Thrivent member, please contact Colter! colter@stpaulmissoula.org Last but not least, if you know high school students at Hellgate or Sentinel, please tell them about this!

Lunch at Immanuel on January 5th and at St. Paul on January 19th.



Immanuel News and Ministries



by Nancy Marks

This month I have had the honor of coordinating the Giving Tree. For the past 20 years Immanuel has hosted a Giving Tree to provide gifts, food baskets and quilts for families in need. ☐ The last 3 years we have provided these Christmas baskets for families and included those who have obtained housing through Family Promise to support them in their first Christmas in their new home, understanding that even though they have found housing, holidays can still be difficult.

The good news is that with Family Promise collaborating with the YWCA at the Family Housing Center, **more families are** being housed. In 2019 we provided Christmas baskets for **4 families** served by Family Promise; in **2020**, we provided Christmas baskets for **7 Family Promise families** and last year **2021** we provided Christmas baskets for **10 Family Promise families and 3 individuals/families** served by the Housing Advocate Network .

Since December of last year, we have **37 families** served by YWCA/Family Promise ☐who have moved into housing and **12 individuals/families** paired with the Housing Advocate Network.

Because of the number of families- we have expanded our Giving Tree beyond Immanuel's walls. Thanks to First Christian, St Paul Lutheran, Valley of Christ Lutheran, Church of Jesus Christ LDS, Atonement Lutheran, the Housing Advocate Network, MIC and Missoula Kiwanis these families and individuals will be having a very happy Christmas. There is truly joy in working together as a community. We are making a difference for families right here in Missoula! Thank you for your support.

VOLUNTEER FOR FAMILY PROMISE

Immanuel/ Atonement week to host Family Promise will be December 26- January 1st. Be watching for the signup to come help with providing gas cards, gift cards, salads and desserts, helping in the kitchen, doing laundry and/or serving as evening host! Questions or want more information- please contact Nancy Marks at 406-396-5494 or nancy@imluchurch.org

Whatever you do, don't stop! You're sending ripples of love and change into the world and the world desperately needs more people like you. Together, we can minimize the negative effects of poverty and move toward empowering generations of people to eliminate it altogether.



Immanuel News and Ministries

Immanuel's Giving Tree Project



Each year Immanuel identifies Missoula families to receive gifts and food through our Giving Tree program. This year families were selected from the Carole Graham Home and Washington Middle School and families who have obtained housing through Family Promise over the last year. New families are selected each year.

These 'Giving Tree Families' submit their gift wish lists to Immanuel and the congregation works to make their wishes come true. These families may not have a Christmas if it wasn't for Immanuel's Giving Tree!

Immanuel quilters create quilts all year long in anticipation of donating them to the Giving Tree Families. Each child from the Giving Tree families is given a quilt, and each family receives a quilt to remind them of the warmth of God's love.

There are many ways to be involved:

- Check out the Giving Tree Volunteer List on the Immanuel Home page for ways to be involved (or call Nancy Marks and she can connect you.)
- Pick up a gift tag from the Tree in the Narthex sign up to bring gifts or groceries online.
- Watch the E- News and Church Bulletins for ways you can assist in this ministry.
- Check out our webpage <https://imluchurch.org/givingtree/> with photos from previous years and signups as they become available.

Questions or want to help? Contact Nancy Marks at nancy@imluchurch.org or 406-396-5494

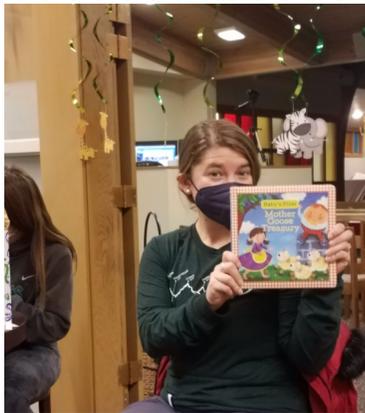
Flagship

What a great November! All the projects were a hit. Wooden letters, Wacky cake, Fried Rice, Snow people, Quesadillas (both cheese and dessert) and personally designed plates. The students said they liked all the projects. One said, "I thought we would just be making snack stuff in cooking, but these are real meals." Many have come in telling us that they have made the recipes at home for their families.

As you can see from the pictures the students took time to design their plates. Some of their creations are to be Christmas gifts for friends and family members. A special thanks to Mick Hanson for cutting out the wooden letters for us and Missoula Textiles for supplying the tubes for the snow people.



Community Events and Fellowship



Thank you from Rebekah, Maddy, and Talis

Thank you SO much to everyone who had a part in putting on the baby shower for Maddy, me, and Baby Talis! Whether you gave a gift, showed up to celebrate, or sent your love from afar... we are grateful beyond measure for the whole Immanuel community. Your support has meant the world to us and we are blessed to be able to tell Talis about the church family that loved her before she was even born!



Baptism Blessings

Blessings and Congratulations to Amanda and Andrew Selle on the baptism of their youngest daughter Avery Rose. Avery was baptized on Sunday, November 20.



Meal Train for Toni Johnson

As many of you are aware, Toni Johnson has been battling cancer. She has been doing chemotherapy for several months and is about to undergo surgery. She has agreed to have a meal train to help her during this difficult time. She also knows the power of prayer and is very appreciative of them and the healing power that accompanies prayer. Please continue to hold Toni in your heart and offer up prayers for her as she goes through the surgery and the recovery.

There are still two slots left at the end of December, if you are able to provide a meal please sign up on the Immanuel website, **the instructions and details are listed on the sign up genius**. Thank you for being a caring congregation!

Community Events and Fellowship



Around the Table: Family Faith Gathering

December 4th, 4:00-5:30 pm

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Around The Table-A multi-church and multi-cultural family gathering, celebrating the Christmas season. Sharing song, craft and food from multiple Christian traditions and cultures. There will be:

-An Open Mic to share any song, talent, story joke...!

-Advent family crafts

-A potluck, if you are able bring something to share.

Language will be English and Swahili

Please sign up your family and a potluck item at the link on the Immanuel website.



An Evening With John Hermanson

Sunday, December 11

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Reception: 6:30 pm / Concert: 7:00 pm

John Hermanson of Story Hill will perform songs from his albums Bethlehem and Isaiah. A free will offering will be donated to the music students at Mwiki Lutheran Bible and Theological College in Tanzania.



Monthly Walk-Run

Mark your calendars :

Ephesians 8:20 Walk/ Run

Jingle Walk/Run

Saturday, December 24, 2022 10 am

Location: Fort Missoula Regional Park

Join the Ephesians 3:20 Walk/Run Group as we strive for a healthy 2022. This group has been formed across the country to promote healthy living and exercise and also to give us a chance to walk and talk with each other!

Walk or run 1 mile, 2 mile or 5 K. Bring your kids and or dogs (on a leash) if you want to bring them. We will have options to walk 1 mile, 2 mile or 5K! Come enjoy a walk and get a little exercise before the festivities begin!

Signup on the Immanuel website.

If you aren't in town, you can always walk with us virtually - post your picture on our Facebook page!

Immanuel News and Ministries

Immanuel Serving Groups



Many thanks to our members who have agreed to chair our monthly serving groups, and many thanks also to you members who have said yes when your chair asked for your help. Four chairs are needed for the spring serving groups. If this is something you could do, please call Carol Fleharty at 406 544-4125.

December and January Serving Groups

December Serving Group

Edith Cranor-Buck, Chair
(970) 901-0836

January Serving Group

Sharon Hanson, Chair
(406) 728-2357

Andy and Katayna Morse: 406 740-0564,
406 748-6826

Curtis and Laura Thompson: 406 258-7197

Steve and Patty Berge: 406 650-8042

Arlene Berry: 406 240-1956

Karen Iverson: 406 829-6920

Buzz and Peggy Tuck: 406 360-7533

Steve and Brenda Weber: 406 273-0496

Jason and Brette Berry: 406 207-2724

Helen Petroff: 406 544-8526

George and Donna Boileau: 406 549-6788

Tana Lambert 406 370-7238

Melissa Voller 406 370-7342

Jim and Katie Steenberg 406 825-5869

Lynne Jensen 406 360-3981

Ray and Tudi Smith 406 251-0343

TJ and Jerilyn Johnson 406 738-1396

Questions? Contact Deb Getz 406 239-6835 or

Carol Fleharty 406 544-4125

Council Highlights

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Council Notes for Newsletter
11/8/22

Council Members Present: Ike Marks, Audrey Thornton, Ray Smith, Marilyn Hall, Albert Melby, Pastor Molly, Tom Thompson, Tana Lambert
Absent: TJ Johnson, Toni Johnson

Pastor's report: Thank you to the council and congregation for the Sabbatical. Confirmation was on Sunday and there are some baptisms planned. Pastor Rebekah is officially done but may come by for Christmas or other services. Thanks to the council for allowing her to finish the week for an easier transition.

Finance: Income: \$23,134 Expenses: \$24,072 Deficit: \$938.07 Oct YTD Income: \$236,585 Oct YTD Expenses: \$242,120 Oct YTD Deficit: \$5,535

Property/Grounds: Having difficulty finding bids for the roof. Only one who bid is the one who did the addition. The one bid we have is in the \$40,000 range. Heat tape on the roof is now on to clear snow

Christian education: Around the Table with other churches. Attendance was around 50 people or so. We want to continue to see where this ministry might lead for the collective community. The Congolese congregation has been invited to come to the December gathering. Luca and Hailey were confirmed this past Sunday.

Service: Giving Tree Fair: Nov 13. Cindy Hockelberg to arrange a time for set of tables with Laurie. Fair after worship. Linda Rosenbaum won't be available. Nancy will email out list of stations so layout can be established. Family Promise: fundraiser \$12,800. Immanuel rotation end of 2023. Washington Middle School: 17 students in flagship program. Going well, dynamic group of kids. Baby Care Kits: no report
Giving Tree: Data missing. CGH no families this year. Fam. Prom.: four families, but no idea how large the families will be. WMS families: form works well, Nancy will add a QR code and include return envelope. If no response from CGH by the 18th then look to more fam. Prom. Shopping: 2:30 Dec 12 at Walmart for shopping of food and gifts. Cookie party 1:00-3:00 vs 2:00-4:00. Planning now on 1:00-3:00. Food: use Sonja's office, food baskets in 405 & 406. Giving Tree Fair: as above. Carol F. will make apple crisp. Will have coffee. Look at simplifying things in coordinating this program with other churches too.

Worship and music: Christmas is on a Sunday this year so no next extra services or volunteers needed. Thanks to Tana for changing the paraments so frequently. Looking into new Advent banners Want to look into having a sing-along Messiah. Would like to invite all the churches in the city. A labyrinth would be a neat feature to have. December 18 at 4Pm there will be a Blue Christmas at Our Savior in Bonner. Hailey Papp will help with communion this Sunday. Trying to get more kids involved in the services.

Witness: New member class probably in January

New/Old Business: EAR campaign - paperwork for grant fundings for solar panels sent out last month. Mortgage had a five year rate. December 1st our rate will change from 3.875 now we're at 5.25 for the new rate. Our monthly payment went down \$43 due amortization. Our balance went down a bit. So far we've taken in \$156,000 with EAR donations so far. Since August we've already applied \$16,000 towards paying down the principal on the loan. Should we apply more toward the principal? \$177,450 is in the EAR fund now which is about 30 months of payment. We will apply another \$14,000 to the \$16,000 from the Build up the Body campaign towards the principal. Sabbatical - The Lilly Foundation grant has a lot of money to give toward this. If we could look at the financing two years out we could quite possibly get a grant to cover the vast majority of the next Sabbatical. Nomination committee - met Nov 1st - talked through some candidates. Will meet again next month or early January.

Motion to adjourn by Albert Melby with a second by Ray Smith Motion passed.
Adjourned 8:212PM

Next Council Meeting is December 13, 2022 @ 7 P.M.
Respectfully submitted by: Audrey Thornton Secretary

This & That

Birthdays



Birthdays:

- 12/3 Shirley Hanson
- 12/4 CeelJay Brown
- 12/7 Holly Mohorcich
- 12/8 Delores Lee
- 12/8 Dick Solum
- 12/9 Steve Weber
- 12/12 Lexon Brown
- 12/15 Keith Phipps
- 12/16 Nicole Schaller
- 12/16 Bradie Marcure
- 12/17 Mark Murphy
- 12/17 Kaitlyn Marcure
- 12/20 Signe Leirfallom-Wilson
- 12/21 Nancy Lechelt
- 12/22 Deborah Getz
- 12/23 Mick Hanson
- 12/26 Swede Gustafson
- 12/26 Jeff Hill
- 12/27 Toni Johnson
- 12/28 Adam McQuiston
- 12/28 Lincoln Mansch
- 12/29 Jordan Lambert
- 12/29 Riley Pellett
- 12/31 Melanie Graham



Anniversaries:

- 12/16 Bruce and Kay Kramer 33 yrs.
- 12/19 Nancy and Ronald Lechelt 68 yrs.
- 12/21 Dale and Sandra Sue Mahlum 67 yrs.
- 12/29 Pastor Molly and Allen Sasser-Goehner 23 yrs.
- 12/30 Julie and Mark Long 45 yrs.
- 12/30 Buzz and Peggy Tuck 34 yrs.
- 12/30 Elizabeth and Christopher Brault 5 yrs.

Anniversaries



Merry Christmas

immanuel staff

- Pastor—Molly Sasser-Goehner
- Director of Worship & Music—Allen Sasser-Goehner
- Director of Christian Education—Sonja Wolsky
- Administrative Assistant—Olivia White
- Choir Director—Nita Smith
- Preschool Teachers—Julie Sager, Wendy Deaton
- Custodians—Carrie & Mark Courter
- Funeral Coordinator—Nancy Marks
- Wedding Coordinator—Vacant
- Church Website: imluchurch.org
- Office Email: office@imluchurch.org

your 2022 church council

- Ike Marks, President
- TJ Johnson, Vice President
- Audrey Thornton, Secretary
- Tana Lambert, Treasurer
- Vacant, Fellowship
- Vacant, Finance
- Toni Johnson, Christian Education
- Albert Melby, Property & Grounds
- Tom Thompson, Service
- Ray Smith, Stewardship
- Marilyn Hall, Worship & Music
- Vacant, Witness
- Vacant, Youth & Family

December Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	2 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	3 Giving Tree
4 10 am Wor- ship Giving Tree 4 pm Around the Table 6pm AA	5 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	6 Giving Tree 12pm Men's Bible Study 2pm Flagship 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	7 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club	8 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	9 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	10 Giving Tree 11am Recital Artworks
11 10 am Wor- ship Giving Tree 2pm Recital Armstrong 6pm AA 7pm John Hermanson	12 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	13 Giving Tree 12pm Men's Bible Study 2pm Flagship 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	14 Giving Tree 10am Naomi's Circle 3pm Boys and Girls Club	15 Giving Tree 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	16 Giving Tree - Kitchen 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	17 Giving Tree - Kitchen 12pm Recital Elin Peterson vocal Food Basket packing
18 10am Christmas Program Giving Tree Kitchen 11am Secret Santa Rooms 6pm AA	19 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	20 12pm Men's Bible Study 2pm Flagship 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	21 3pm Boys and Girls Club	22 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	23 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	24 Christmas Eve Service 4 pm (Band) 8 pm (Organ)
25 11am Christmas Worship 6pm AA	26 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	27 12pm Men's Bible Study 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	28 3pm Boys and Girls Club	29 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	30 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	31
1 11am New Year's Day Worship 6pm AA	2 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	3 12pm Men's Bible Study 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	4 3pm Boys and Girls Club	5 3pm Boys and Girls Club 6pm AA	6 3pm Boys and Girls Club 5:30pm BW	7



Immanuel
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

imm a n u e l
evangelical
lutheran church
pastor molly sasser-goehner
830 south avenue west
missoula, montana 59801-7912
office: 406.549-0736

email addresses:

church: office@imluchurch.org
pastor: pastormolly@imluchurch.org
allen sasser-goehner: allen@imluchurch.org
sonja wolsky: sonja@imluchurch.org
church website: www.imluchurch.org

vision and mission statement:

vision:

Immanuel is called to be a caring, compassionate, and diverse congregation that is spiritually nourished through Jesus Christ and reaches out to the community at large.

mission:

share the love of Christ with all!

The Immanuelite is the official publication of news and events at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
830 South Avenue West
Missoula, MT 59801

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



ImmanuelLutheran
CHURCH

Non-Profit org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Missoula, MT 59801
Permit # 132

Join us For
Worship Each Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve Services 4 and 8 pm
Christmas Day Service 11 am

In this issue...

- Pastor's Sabbatical
- Advent /Christmas Schedule
- High School Lunch Update
- Giving Tree
- Pastor Rebekah & Maddy Thank You
- Council Notes

