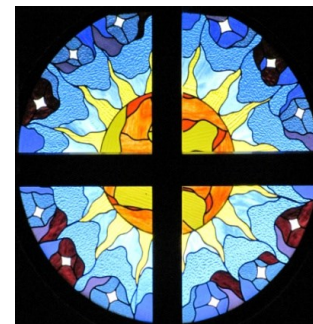


Immanuel Lutheran Church

Hear Love. Eat Love. Share Christ's Love.

January 2021 Newsletter



Weekly Services and Communion

Sundays- 9 am
Live
Streaming

1/10 Car Hop
Communion
10:30- 11 am

Office Hours

Kelly in on
Thursdays



Christmas Eve -

Live Streaming

Thursday, December
24th at 4: 30 pm

Lessons and Carols -

Live Streaming

Sunday, December
27th at 9am

“In Him We Have Redemption Through His Blood,
the Forgiveness of Our Trespasses” by Peter J. Weller

The text for this month's lesson comes from the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fulness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him, you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption of God's own people, to the praise of his glory.” (Ephesians 1:3-14)

The above is, indeed, a lengthy paragraph. In the original Greek text, it is a single sentence! Susan Hylen, Associate Professor of New Testament, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, wrote in Working Preacher, “Ephesians is a letter about living together in the midst of human differences. The author writes as a Jew to a largely Gentile audience with the message that in Christ God has ‘made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us’ (Ephesians 2:14).

“God is praised. . . for having chosen and adopted the church as God's own people. Verse 4 states that ‘God chose us’ to be holy and blameless, and verse 5 adds, ‘he destined us for adoption as his children.’

“Adoption was not uncommon in antiquity. Among the elite it served the important function of allowing for an heir if one had no children, or if one's children died. The adopted person . . . gained social status through association with the parent's social status. In the same way a biological child would, the adopted child benefitted from the social and political connections of their parent. They also gained wealth through their inheritance. In return the adopted child honored the parent through taking the parent's name and being loyal to them.

Continued to page 5

Find us on Facebook at Immanuel Lutheran Washington Iowa and online at luthwash.org.

YouTube- [luthwash](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv8w8w8w8w8w8w8w8w8w8w8) * Email us at luthwash@hotmail.com

Come visit us at 1226 East Washington Street, Washington, Iowa 52353

Church ~ 319.653.3950

Pastor Howard ~ 319.333.7758 (Home)

Monthly Updates (Month to date)

Account balances as of 12-22-20

General Fund ~ \$8,554.17

Savings ~ \$0

Building/Visions ~ \$5,790.34

Endowment ~ \$3,302.48

Community Assistance ~ \$3,822.54

Mortgage ~ \$67,865.84

Attendance

No Wednesday evening worship
Due to COVID-19

Sunday, November 29 ~ 9 am ~
Live Streaming 566 views

Sunday, December 6 ~ 9 am ~
Live Streaming 296 views

Sunday, December 13 ~ 9 am ~
Live Streaming 336 views
Car Hop Communion ~ 50

Sunday, December 20 ~ 9 am ~
Live Streaming 452 views

Altar Flowers

Since we are not currently worshipping inside the building, the chancel is not being adorned with flowers from the congregation. If you would like to give God glory through bringing altar flowers/plant please call the church 653-3950. Arrangements will be made for the church to be open so you may adorn the chancel.

Immanuel's Golden Nuggets

As a people of God, the following are the identifying, non-negotiable characteristics of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

- 1) God's Word and Sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion) are paramount in the life of Immanuel.
- 2) We are an inclusive congregation; ALL are welcome.
- 3) As disciples of Christ, we live in service to God and others.
- 4) We are an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregation.

As discerned by the 2019 Council.

Christian Sympathy

We extend our deepest Christian sympathy to the families of

+Rex Raymond Booth (Vicki Rebling's Uncle)
+Judy Fallsfeather (Bev Bailey's Aunt)
+Beulah Temple (Mary's Mom)

may their families find comfort and peace
in the promise of the resurrection of Christ.

Sign up TODAY for

Meals on Wheels

Our month is February.

Contact DeAnn at 319.461.5411
to volunteer.



LIVE Streaming of Worship or Conference Call options

Until further notice, Immanuel is live streaming our Sunday worship at 9 a.m. Streaming is going to Immanuel's Facebook page: Immanuel Lutheran Washington Iowa. Brian Lueck is also putting it on Immanuel's website: luthwash.org AND Immanuel's YouTube channel luthwash. You may go back to these locations and the video will still be available. We are reaching people across the country who are choosing to worship with us!

If you choose not to use the streaming of worship, you may conference call in. Call (319) 656-2663 and you will be asked for a participant code 344238#. You are then connected to the conference call! This phone line will be opened at 8:50 a.m. on Sundays and it will end at the conclusion of worship.



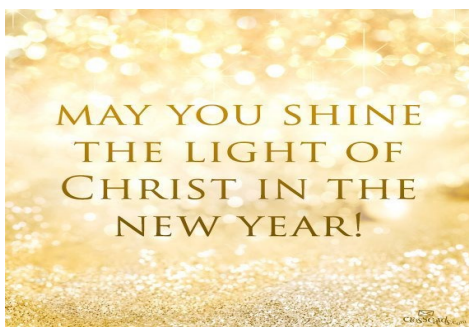
Birthdays for January

6- Janola Rueckert
7- Naomi Erickson
7- Sherry Ives
8- Jim Six
10- Karen Heineman
11- Marty Westen
13- Peter Weller
14- Tricia Kroll
18- Ray Poe
24- Ainsley Six
28- Rodney Hill
28- Angela Taylor
31- Ron Andersen



Anniversaries for January

22- Ray & Alta Poe



HACAP

Your dollar buys more when HACAP orders food, consider sending a few dollars to:

HACAP

2175 Lexington Blvd # 1 Washington, Iowa 52353

Help your local families during this difficult time.

Thank you, DeAnn

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Finance- Tuesday, December 29th at 6:30 pm

Council- Sunday, January 3rd at 10:30 am
via conference call



LUTHER LEAGUE

6th – 12th Graders

When: Sunday, January 17th
Where: Immanuel
Why: Game Competition!
Who: 6th – 12th Graders (friends are WELCOME!)
Time: 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Lunch: Pizza
Bring: Side or dessert to share
Leadership: Pastor Howard
and Steve Vetter
Wear FACE COVERINGS



Don't Forget Immanuel Lutheran

During this time of social distancing, we continue to give God our thanks and praise through our tithes and offerings of thanksgiving for the mission of the church including the care of those in need. We continue to receive your tithes and offerings by: mailing your checks to Immanuel Lutheran (1226 E. Washington St., Washington 52353), call the church (653-3950) to have the automatic withdrawal (Simply Giving) enrollment form mailed to you, or give online through Immanuel's website (luthwash.org). We are grateful for your continued generosity to God through Immanuel Lutheran during this time of separation. The ministries of Immanuel Lutheran do not stop because we are in "safety/separation mode" due to COVID-19.

Dear Immanuel,
Thank you for the care package I received before Thanksgiving. It was a great surprise and it's always fun to get mail! Thanks for thinking of me.
Addison Six

Dear Immanuel,
Thank you for all the calls, notes, and prayers or any contact during this pandemic. I miss all of you. Your thoughts make the day a little brighter.
Love, Doris Moore

THANK YOU to everyone who assisted with the bagging of Christmas toys for Toys for Tots on Monday, December 14th: **Ron Andersen, Naomi Erickson, Gary Fischer, DeAnn Hakert, Mike Howard, Pastor Howard, Sharol Kroll, Stan Kroll, Steve Vetter, Diana Wubben, and Audrey Wubben.** Through your work as "Santa's Elves" you brought the love of Christ to disadvantaged children in Washington County.

THANK YOU to all the Immanuel Salvation Army Bell Ringers at Wal-Mart who endured the blustery, cold day on Sunday, November 29th: **Bev Bailey, Steve and Kathy Vetter, Carrie and Emma Lueck, Ron Andersen, and Ray Poe** (and anyone who joined in, but didn't sign up). 70% of the money placed in Washington County kettles remains in Washington County. The Washington Area Ministerial oversees the expenditure of Washington County Salvation Army Kettle donations. The need for assistance depleted the 2019 donations and we are already using the 2020 anticipated donations. Thank you, Ringers and donors, to this Kettle cause.

THANK YOU for the Christmas cards, gifts, and even birthday wishes! It is an honor and humbling to be your pastor and partner in proclaiming the life we have through our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ. My prayer for 2021 is that we finally begin worshipping together safely! That through Faith+Lead we become confident in our disruptive innovation that God leads us through. As beloved Children of God we claim our identities and move through 2021 boldly filled with hope. - Pastor Howard

Thank You

Provided Special Music for the Christmas Season (December 24th, 27th, or January 3rd):

Bev Bailey, Alto Saxophone and **Mike Jewell**, Piano ~ *Beautiful Star of Bethlehem*

Sara Bartlett, Piano ~ *Christmas Montage*

Immanuel's Adult Choir: **Lee Buchholz, John Harris, Debbie Jewell, Mike Jewell, Brian Lueck, Carrie Lueck, Clyde Pearce, Jane Runaas, Jon Runaas, Margie Runaas, Fran Victor** with **Sara Bartlett**, Director and **Mikaila Matheson**, Flute ~ *Kneel with the Shepherds*

Lee Buchholz ~ *Stille Nacht (Silent Night)* sung in German

Bev Bailey, Alto Saxophone ~ *O Holy Night*

Jane Runaas and **Margie Runaas**, Piano ~ *God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen and What Child Is This*

Fran Victor, Voice and **Clyde Pearce**, Piano ~ *In the Bleak Midwinter*

Clyde Pearce, Violin and **Margie Runaas**, Piano ~ *Away in a Manger*

Mike Jewell, Rio Lujano, Kartika Putri, Margie Runaas, Jane Runaas, and Jon Runaas: Vocal Ensemble ~ *O magnum mysterium*

John Harris, Trumpet and **Margie Runaas**, Piano ~ *Still, Still, Still*

Sara Bartlett and **Lee Buchholz** ~ *Star of the East*, Duet

January 2021, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

Raising Our Voice for Iowa Children and Families: Families struggling without access to mental healthcare. Human services providers overworked and underpaid. Former refugees and immigrants striving to build new lives. These are all issues faced by Iowans. Help us ensure their voices are heard at the Iowa State Capitol. This legislative session may look different from past years. But now more than ever, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) will be advocating for our community members who are so often overlooked in our society. You can join us in this important work. Visit LSIowa.org/advocacy and sign up for our Advocacy Alerts. Learn more about the legislative process, the issues impacting your neighbors, and your role as a citizen in helping to amplify their voices. If you would like more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Compassion During Crisis

Across the state, LSI team members work with families at risk of child abuse or neglect, connecting them to the tools and resources they need to keep their children in their homes whenever safely possible. One of the critical programs available to parents is the Strengthening Families program. The program typically provides 14 weeks of in-person parent group work, family activities, and a family meal to enhance child development, help parents create their own support network, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse or neglect. When COVID-19 created challenges to this in-person model, LSI did not give up on the families who relied on this important service. Instead, LSI's Behavioral Health Intervention Services team has gone virtual. Maria, a program supervisor with LSI, has been leading a virtual version of the program this year, where families join a Zoom meeting and use "breakout rooms" for individual sessions. Meals are purchased from Hy-Vee and delivered the night of the session, so families are still able to celebrate their tradition of eating together each week. This year has created several challenges for all of us, but LSI continues to answer the call and provide the high-quality care and services Iowa children and families deserve.

Continued from page 1

"The adoption indicated here is unique in that it is not the adoption of an individual but of a people. The language echoes the stories of God choosing Israel . . . and the purpose of being chosen for 'redemption' (Ephesians 1:7, 14) evokes God's release of Israel from slavery (e.g., Exodus 6:6). . . . The author is not so much concerned with God's relationship to individual believers as with the claim that God has chosen a people for God's self."

Karoline Lewis, Professor and the Marbury E. Anderson Chair of Biblical Preaching at Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, also wrote in the Working Preacher, ". . . it is worthwhile to remember that at stake in all of this is God's longing to bring the entire world into the relationship that is acknowledged at the start of the blessing— 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ' (1:3). Just as God is Father to Jesus, God desires to be father to all who are in Christ. In fact, in verse 3, the root for 'blessing' is used no less than three times in this one verse. This repetition of blessing sets the stage for the claim of the abundance of God's grace that is at the heart of these opening verses of the letter.

"These verses . . . [from] Ephesians are always the designated epistle reading for the Second Sunday of Christmas, paired with the Prologue of the Gospel of John (1:1-18), in all three years of the Revised Common Lectionary. One obvious reason for this matchmaking lies in the language about adoption and inheritance found in the Ephesians text as compared to John's similar claim, 'But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God' (1:12-13)."

In these verses (Ephesians 1:3-14), we see, clearly, that God takes the initiative and acts. God comes into the lives of believers. God chose us. God blessed us. God adopted us as God's children. God redeemed us through Christ. God freely bestowed God's grace upon us. In Christ, we have received an inheritance. Believing in him marks us with the seal of the Holy Spirit. God initiates the action, lavishing us with all these good gifts. This is all God's work. These are God's gifts to us. Nothing that we do on our own can bring about this same result.

THANK YOU to EVERYONE

who contributed to the Luther League's "Fill the Boot" virtual appeal to purchase winter clothes for children in need. On Sunday, December 20th the Luther League youth went shopping for children's snow boots, snow pants, and warm clothes. Kathy Vetter secured a \$250 Thrivent Action Card for this appeal. The congregation's generous donations of \$708.60!!!! (way surpassing 2019's donations of \$333), the \$250 Thrivent Visa Card, and Luther League added money from their Luther League account to be able to spend **\$1699.35!!!! WOW!!!!** The Luther League shoppers were: **Taylor Bartholomew, Lucas Kroll, Caitlin Kroll, Emma Lueck, Thomas Lueck, Ajay Six** (Avery Six and Aden Six, were unable to join us due to being in quarantine) **Claire Wubbena, Brayden Zywiec, Mike Howard, Steve**



Vetter, and Pastor Howard. The clothes were brought to HACAP on Monday morning and immediately snow boots were given to a child in the daycare. We clothe Christ when we clothe those in need; Sharing Christ's Love! To see more shopping photos, go to the church's Facebook page: Immanuel Lutheran Washington Iowa.



2021 Offering Envelopes

2021 envelopes, for your Tithes and offerings of Thanksgiving, are on the table in the hallway. Call the church for availability for you to pick your envelopes up. Envelopes will be available during Car Hop Communion on Sunday, January 10th. These envelopes are for your monetary offerings to God and are used to support the ministries of Immanuel Lutheran through the church budget.

If you prefer to have your offering received through automatic withdrawal, Simply Giving, give Kelly a call and she will send you the enrollment form.

Welcome Michelle Bartholomew!

We received **Michelle** on Sunday, December 20th, during the 9 a.m. live stream worship through Affirmation of Faith. We welcome you with joy and excitement into Christ's family known as Immanuel Lutheran! We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world.



The Epiphany Season

January brings us out of the Christmas season and into the season of Epiphany. “Epiphany” means “to show” or “to make known” or “to reveal”. During the 2nd century “Epiphany” was used, by the church, to express the manifestations of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. During the Epiphany Season, manifestations of God incarnate are commemorated: **Jesus, Lord and King, of both Jews and Gentiles** – when the Wise Men visited child Jesus in Bethlehem. The Wise Men were the first to reveal Jesus, to the world, as the incarnate Christ. This is called the Epiphany of Our Lord and is always celebrated on January 6th. The color of the paraments for Epiphany is white: purity, holiness, and joy. **Jesus’ Divinity** – Jesus’ baptism by John the Baptist, with the speaking of God the Father and the appearance of God the Holy Spirit revealed Jesus to be God’s Son (celebrated Sunday, January 10th). The color of the paraments is also white. **Jesus revealing God’s power through love for the world** – made known through Jesus’ ministry of preaching, miracles, and healings. The color of the paraments is green: representing the new life that Jesus gives us and our spiritual growth.

The Epiphany season concludes with the Transfiguration of our Lord, which will be celebrated on Sunday, February 14th. The church year moves from the season of Epiphany into the season of Lent beginning, Ash Wednesday, February 17th.

Bishop Current’s Sermon January 3, 2021

To acknowledge that 2020 has been a trying year for every, faithful congregation in the Southeastern Iowa Synod, the Office of the Bishop has provided a pre-recorded Service of the Word. Pastor Howard will deliver Bishop Current’s sermon on Sunday, January 3rd, during Immanuel’s live stream service.

Following Immanuel’s live stream worship on January 3rd, the service provided by The Office of the Bishop will be posted to Immanuel’s Facebook page. Two wonderful worship experiences will be offered to you on the 3rd. May you be blessed through them as God is given Glory and Honor.

Installation of 2021 Council Members

During worship on Sunday, December 20th Pastor Howard installed the following persons elected to council by the congregation at Immanuel’s Annual Meeting: Bev Bailey, President; Deb Tisor, Vice President; Naomi Erickson, Secretary; Scott Bartholomew, Mike Jewell, April Six, and Rob Taylor. God bless you with God’s Holy Spirit, that you may prove faithful servants of Christ. (Not photographed: Rob Taylor).



Confirmand and Mentor Dinner ~ January 31st

Our 8th grade confirmation student, Claire Wubben, will be each asking a woman to be her mentor between January 1st and January 13th. To kick off this new relationship a Confirmand and Mentor dinner will be held on **Sunday, January 31st at 6 p.m.**, Pastor Howard will host this dinner. The mentor will meet with their confirmand once a week in February/March to journey together on faith topics: talking faith together; worship; learning; witness; and service (discussion sheets provided by Pastor Maureen). The confirmands will write a faith review with the help from their mentor (due in March) and complete a service project with their mentor (completed by April). During the months of March and April, the confirmand and mentor will only meet at their discretion to complete their servant project. The confirmand and mentor will explain their servant project to the congregation on Sunday, April 18th. The mentor will be present with the confirmand at their confirmation on Sunday, April 25^h, during worship. What a great opportunity to enrich the life of a teen!

Boxing Food At HACAP; December 28th

HACAP has seen an increased demand for food this December and is running out of boxed food for families in need. Immanuel will be boxing food at HACAP on **Monday, December 28th, 1 p.m.** This opportunity, to prepare boxes for hungry families in Washington County, only takes an hour of your time. The only requirement (besides wearing a mask) is the ability to stand for the hour. Come and help eradicate food insecurity in Washington County, Share Christ's Love! HACAP: 2175 Lexington Blvd, Bldg. 1.



A Prayer for Putting on a Face Mask

Creator God, as I prepare to go into the world, help me to see the sacramental nature of wearing of this cloth. Let it be a tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbors, as I love myself.

Christ Jesus, since my lips will be covered, uncover my heart, that people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes. Since my voice may be muffled, help me to speak clearly, not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit, as the elastic touches my ears, remind me to listen carefully and caringly to all those I meet. May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner, and may each breath that it holds, be filled with Your love. In Your name and in that love, I pray. Amen.

Rev. Richard Bott, Moderator

Presbyterian Church of Canada



Car Hop Communion: Sunday, January 10th

Pastor Howard will be serving Holy Communion on **Sunday, January 10th, 10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.** under the portico in the church's parking lot. 52 people were nourished with the presence of Christ at the Car Hop Communion on Sunday, December 13th.

Pastor Howard will consecrate the elements (wafers, wine, and grape juice) during the live stream/conference call worship, 9 a.m. Pastor Howard will be wearing a face shield when consecrating the elements and during distribution. The common cup will not be available only individual, plastic cups. Cars will enter the parking lot through the North entrance and exit through the West entrance. Pastor Howard will give you Holy Communion while you remain in your cars. You will then drive to the garbage can and throw away your plastic cup(s). However, if you chose not to participate in this meal opportunity, fasting is still an appropriate option.

A quick glance at Car Hop Communion Dates:

January 10th Serving **10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.**
Under the portico, regardless of the weather

February 14th Serving **10:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.**
Under the portico, regardless of the weather

Funding Forward Learning Community

Immanuel Lutheran Church has been selected to be one of the 12 congregations (applicants received from across the United States and all denominations) to participate in a yearlong Funding Forward Learning Community. This is quite an honor and a privilege to have been chosen! There is absolutely NO cost involved for us to participate, as this is totally funded through a Lilly Grant secured by Luther Seminary's faith+lead. Luther Seminary was very impressed with our application!!



Gary Fischer and Pastor Howard will be the two lead participants. We will need to formulate a small group of people (don't know how many) to join in this process. THEN we will need the entire congregation's participation as we get involved. This means not being afraid to experiment (even if they don't go as we expected) and become innovative. Yes, change will be inevitable. The fruits that we will be able to harvest from this learning community and the changes we will implement will be a blessing to the financial sustainability of Immanuel.

At the Annual Meeting we showed a portion of the informational video:

https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/communities/funding-forward-on-demand-info-session/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=sharpspring&sslid=MzM2NDYwMrU0MDEzAwA&sseid=MzI0MjIwNjE0twAA&jobid=c6ad58e4-8c78-4b0e-9cd7-cbf08e6b47ac

And we received a unanimous vote to proceed with the application process and, if chosen, the congregation will support and fully engage in this learning/active process. YAY, we WERE chosen!!

Please be in prayerful consideration of joining this small group and be a leader as we explore the doors God is opening for us. God is leading Immanuel in an exciting direction and in faith we follow. FAITH over fear!

Gary and Pastor Howard will begin this process with a two-hour Zoom meeting in January with subsequent monthly 2-hour Zoom meetings. The first book, of required reading, has already been sent to us THE COMING REVOLUTION IN CHURCH ECONOMICS Why Tithes and Offerings Are No Longer Enough, and What You Can do About It by Mark Deymaz with Harry Li. Mark Deymaz says churches are in a "growing movement and a need for disruptive innovation" (page 28). Immanuel is ready and primed to see how God will lead us in disruptive innovation. The Holy Spirit is blowing, and change is in God's breath for Immanuel Lutheran!

Poinsettias 2020

Ron & Linda Brown- In memory of granddaughter, Paula, her great grandparents, and her great uncle, Gary.

Ron & Char Andersen- In loving memory of +Lydia Andersen and +Albert Andersen

Ron & Char Andersen- In loving memory of +Harvey and +Ellen Johnson

Mike & Pastor Howard- To the glory of God for the birth of Christ

Naomi Erickson- In loving memory of husband, +Ken Erickson

Bev Bailey- In memory of family

The Jewell Family



Celebrations of the Church in January



Second Sunday of Christmas; January 3rd

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

The feast of Epiphany; January 6th

The feast of Epiphany ("manifestation") concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God's glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.



Baptism of Our Lord; January 10th

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus and the Ephesians, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.

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