

Wilson-Immanuel Lutheran Parish
401 310th Street
Wilson WI 54027
Address Service Requested

Mission Statement

Wilson - Immanuel Lutheran Parish serves to provide all people the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ, encourage faith and obedience to Christ and, through diverse opportunities for evangelism, serve God's people in our communities, nation, and throughout the world.

*December 2018, Newsletter for
Wilson-Immanuel Lutheran Parish*



*Wilson-Immanuel Lutheran Parish
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“This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.

Bishop’s Christmas Message 2018

Dear Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,



I’m writing this the day after I get home from my first ever trip to the Holy Land. My husband Randy and I decided that after three decades as pastors we should make a pilgrimage to all the places we’ve been preaching about for so many years. I was excited to see Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Temple Wall, and Athens, Corinth and Rome and all the other landmarks of our Spiritual Geography. I was especially excited to see Bethlehem.

While I was in Bethlehem, I heard Pastor Lori Ruge-Jones, a gifted story teller recite from heart, Luke 2, the Christmas story. We were in a beautiful chapel on the site where according to tradition; the angels announced to the Shepherds the good news of Jesus’ birth. Imagine these familiar words, spoken from the heart, echoing off the stones of the Shepherd’s Field chapel.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”

The group of pilgrims I was with sat in silence for a few moments before we sang Christmas carols: *O Little Town of Bethlehem, Angels we have heard on High, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Silent Night, Away in the Manger...* It was a holy moment and highlight of our trip to the Holy Land. It was simple, beautiful, goose bump, Hallmark Card moment....

BUT the undercurrent of that moment is more complicated. As tourists we were well aware that Bethlehem in 2018 is a city controlled by the Palestinians and the surrounding area is controlled by Israel. It is a land that has been fought over throughout known history by those who considered it Holy; Jews, Muslims and Christians. It is a place that builds walls to separate, and struggles with daily violence and conflict.

The Shepherds of first century were well aware that Bethlehem was under foreign occupation by Rome. The Roman Caesar, Augustus sent out a decree that Jews were to be enrolled in their hometown to be taxed. There were uprisings and revolts against Roman rule of the Jews. It was and is complicated and there is no quick fix.

But all of that is far away or long ago. How about the here and now? Is your life like a beautiful peaceful Hallmark card wishing season’s greetings or is your life more complicated like a major geopolitical conflict? Or is it somewhere in between? Regardless, there is one thing that is true, in the midst of it all God put on flesh and came down to us, to live among us. In the midst of it all, Jesus was born.

Rev. Lauri Sta. Olesen

The Advent Wreath

As Christians, we use symbols to express visually the basic tenets of our faith and as reminders of the pilgrimage of our life in Christ. Symbols can have heightened meaning for us when associated with particular seasons of that journey. One such symbol is the Advent wreath.

The Advent wreath has its roots in the pre-Christian practices of northern Europe. People sought the return of the sun in the dark time of the year (at the winter solstice) by lighting candles and fires. As early as the middle Ages, Christians used fire and light to represent Christ's coming into the world. Using this same symbolism, the Advent wreath developed a few centuries ago in Germany as a sign of the waiting and hopeful expectation of the return in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The wreath, a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God's people, even in death, and the lighted candles were a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world. This symbolism can be just as strong for us today. As is the case with all symbols, they speak most loudly to remind us of God's promises of life when they are drawn directly out of our daily experience and environment.

One should consider using only natural materials from God's creation when making an Advent wreath. Evergreens come in many varieties and may be treated with a flame-retardant substance. Branches of holly, laurel, and other green shrubs, which retain their freshness longer than pine, may also be used. The circular shape, a symbol of eternal life, is most important. Using an alternative shape, such as a log, would diminish the meaning of the symbol, which is no longer a circle. There is no one prescribed color for the candles, although several traditions are current. Four natural colored candles are always appropriate and symbolize the Light for which we wait. Four blue candles match the blue used for the season, a color representing hope.

Some assemblies may have the older tradition of using purple candles, keeping purple as the color for both Advent and Lent. The practice of using a pink candle on the third Sunday in Advent is no longer consistent with the current lectionary. This tradition arose when Advent was a thoroughly penitential season much like Lent.

Liturgical renewal in the last decades of this century has shifted the focus of these four weeks to one of hope and expectation of the coming of the Christ. This hope looks forward not only to celebrating the child in the manger, but even more to Christ's coming in glory at the end of time—a continuation of the eschatological emphasis of the last Sundays after Pentecost. Candles in rich royal blue are symbolic of this hope. Coincidentally, these two colors, purple and blue, have long been associated with the same ideas: the symbolic colors of royal blood and of longing; the natural colors of the dawn before the sun rises and the deep shades of midnight.

The Advent wreath is also appropriate for daily use in home devotions. The making of the wreath can be a family activity, using materials gathered from the yard or garden.

(From "Worship Formation and Liturgical Resources: Frequently Asked Questions", Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

Month: December 2018 – Seasons of Advent and Christmas

Worship Times: Immanuel – 8:30 a.m.; Wilson – 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 2: Advent 1

- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ ELW Setting: ELW Setting IV with Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Jerimiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 21:25-36: God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

Sunday, December 9: Advent 2

- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Setting: ELW Setting IV
- ❖ Readings: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 3:1-6: John the Baptist is a herald of the saving Lord, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

Wednesday, December 19: Longest Night Service of Healing and Hope (See [Parish News](#) for Details)

Sunday, December 16: Advent 3

- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ ELW Setting: ELW Setting IV with Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 3:7-18: John the Baptist heralds the mighty one "who is coming." John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

Sunday, December 23: Advent 4

- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ ELW Setting: ELW Setting IV with Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55; Hebrews 10:5-10
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 1:39-55: We are presented with Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

Monday, December 24: Christmas Eve

- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ ELW Setting: ELW Setting IV with Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20: God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

Sunday, December 30: Christmas 1

- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ ELW Setting: ELW Setting with Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 2:41-52: Jesus grew up in a family that went to the Passover festival each year. It was in this environment of faithful adherence to the law that Jesus grew into spiritual maturity and an understanding of his identity and mission.

PASTOR'S NOTE

Keeping the Twelve Days of Christmas: I have to admit “The Twelve Days of Christmas” is not one of my favorite Christmas songs, but it does serve as a good reminder Christmas isn’t a one day event, but a whole season lasting twelve days from Christmas Day to Epiphany (January 6). It’s also a great reminder to keep celebrating the birth of Jesus throughout the season – and the year. So, don’t limit your celebration to a single day. Gather with family and friends throughout the season – eat cookies, watch the Hallmark movies even if you’ve seen them already (one of our young people pointed out you can always tell when the movie will be over because the main characters kiss five minutes before the end), enjoy your Christmas decorations, sing your favorite Christmas songs and, most importantly, read the story again and again (Luke 2:1-20).

From our house to yours, may the blessings of Christmas be with you throughout the year. Pr. Bob and Sue

PARISH NEWS

Parish Mission Statement

Wilson – Immanuel Lutheran Parish serves to provide all people the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ, encourage faith and obedience to Christ and, through diverse opportunities for evangelism, serve God’s people in our communities, nation, and throughout the world.

Upcoming Events in the Parish:

- December 16 – Assistant to the Bishop, Erin Nelson, Guest Preacher
- December 16 – Sunday School Christmas Program at Immanuel (6:00 p.m.)
- December 19 – Longest Night Service of Healing and Hope at Immanuel
- December 23 – Sunday School Christmas Program at Wilson (During Worship)
- December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship
 - 2:00 p.m. at Wilson
 - 4:00 p.m. at Immanuel
- December 25 – No Christmas Day Worship

Check the newsletter calendar and the Web site (www.wilsonimmanuel.org) for additional information.

Sunday School Christmas Programs: Wilson and Immanuel’s Sunday School Christmas Programs have been scheduled for Sunday, December 16, 6:00 p.m. at Immanuel, and Sunday, December 23 during the 10:30 a.m. worship at Wilson. Join our young people as they proclaim and celebrate the birth of our Lord.

Longest Night Service: As we prepare for the coming of the Christ child, join us for *Waiting for the Light - A Longest Night Service of Healing and Hope*, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 19th at Immanuel Lutheran Church.

The Church’s ministry of healing emphasizes caring for the sick in the widest possible understanding of the term. The need for healing is not limited to those desiring help for a specific illness or injury. The Christian assembly at worship may embrace the gift of healing for emotional, spiritual, relational, and physical needs; whatever troubles your body, mind, and heart. The stress and pressures of the holiday season often highlight our need for healing. Likewise, Advent’s themes of waiting, repentance, reflection, and preparation may also reveal hurts and brokenness that cry out for mending. With all creation we cry out for reconciliation, restoration, and wholeness. We wait in hope for the coming of the Christ child, the source of our hope and the light of the world.

WILSON NEWS

Wilson WELCA: The next regular meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Thursday, December 13. All women of the congregation are invited to attend.

Wilson Council: The next regular meeting is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Thursday, December 13. Meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

November 8, 2018 Council Meeting Highlights: (Complete minutes are available in the office)

- WELCA will discuss ideas for gifts to be given to visitors that will be purchased by the church.
- After discussion Barb Lamb made a motion to use the \$500.00 in memory of Ed Stack to purchase around 22 new hymnals, seconded by Mike. Motion carried.
- It was decided not to participate in the ELCA Good Gifts Program at this time.
- Garbage removal after funerals, suppers and other large events was discussed. Jennifer will dispose of garbage after the Saturday funeral. In the future Mike will take the garbage bags to Cady Town Hall.
- Chuck Lamb made a motion to accept the Church Facility Use Guidelines and Policies with an addition that discretion would be made by Pastor and Council President, seconded by Mike. Motion carried.
- Chuck Lamb made a motion to approve the Revision of Constitution and Bylaws Revisions including the Endowment By-Laws when they are completed, seconded by Chuck Walz. Motion carried.

Assisting with Worship at Wilson: December 2018

Altar Care	Ushers
December: Help Needed	December: Barb and Roger Kronholm

If you are unable to serve as scheduled please find a replacement and notify the church office.
Sign-up sheets are on the table in the narthex. Your help will be appreciated.

Tuesday Community Supper: The Tuesday Community Supper is served the first Tuesday of every month at Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 1350 Florence Street, Baldwin, Wisconsin. This is a free meal open to anyone in the community, served from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Area churches, businesses and organizations take turns preparing and serving good nutritious food every month. St. Mary's Church will be preparing and serving the meal on Tuesday, December 4th, 2018. The menu is chili, vegetarian barley soup, raw veggies, bread/crackers and dessert bars.

2018 Christmas Poinsettia Order

6 ½" red poinsettia plants are available at a cost of \$9.25 each.

You can place your order by using the envelop in the service folder. Please make checks payable to Wilson Lutheran Church. Orders are due in the church office on Tuesday, December 18.

Zion Senior Choir Christmas Concert and Kaffe Kallas: All are invited to attend this annual event, Sunday, December 16 beginning at 4:00 p.m. and Zion Lutheran Church – Woodville. Treats to be served include pickled herring, lefse, rommegrot, rosettes, krumkake, sandbakkels, julekage, sweet breads, cheese and crackers, cookies, fresh fruit and more.

WILSON LUTERAN CHURCH 2019 USHER SCHEDULE		
January	Chuck and Barb Lamb	4 Sundays
February	Charlie and Sharon Bowell	4 Sundays
March	Chuck Walz and Gary Peterson	5 Sundays
April	Doug and Michelle Larson	4 Sundays – <i>Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter</i>
May	Andy and Jes Lamb	4 Sundays
June	LouAnne Anderson and Doug Faber	5 Sundays
July	Dave and Linda Powers	4 Sundays – <i>Parish Picnic</i>
August	Jerry and Vicki Glampe	4 Sundays
September	Mike and Sherry Ellefson	5 Sundays
October	Duane and Pat Butler	4 Sundays
November	Dwight and Karen Johnson	4 Sundays
December	Roger and Barb Kronholm	5 Sundays – <i>Christmas Eve</i>

IMMANUEL NEWS

Immanuel Luther Church Council Meeting Minutes:

Date of Meeting: November 13, 2018

Start Time: 7:00 pm End Time: 8:33 pm

Attendees: Pastor Bob Dahm, Matt Main, Monica Eggert, Roger Ohman, Jodi Voeltz, Ranae Demulling, Trish Swanepoel, Laura Briesemeister, David Rosen Absent: Brad Voeltz

Agenda

1. Pastor Bob opened with devotional followed by Pastor's Report
2. Treasure's Report-David made motion; Laura seconded, motion carried
3. Secretary's Report-Brad made motion; Monica seconded; motion carried

Old Business

1. Trish called Pest Control-no response
2. Thanksgiving Eve service will be at Immanuel, 7:00 pm

Ongoing Business

1. Ramp memorial plaque/dedication ceremony
 - a. Size options: 14x14 or 16x16, \$450, it will list those who donated in memorial of someone
 - b. Roger made motion to use money from memorial fund to pay for the new plaque; Monica seconded; motion carried
2. The louvers on the church roof will be repaired, date TBD
3. Children's offering jar Oct 22-December-WestCap in GC and Christmas for Children of Clear Lake
4. Cemetery guidelines-Laura presented her research, council will discuss at next meeting and set new cemetery polices

New Business

1. Welcomed Jodi Voeltz to council
2. Merging Spirit Squad and Sunday School checking accounts to be named Youth Fund-Roger made motion; David seconded; motion carried. Council discussed ongoing options to replenish account
3. Offering from Children's Christmas Program will go into the Youth Fund
4. Trish made motion to accept Pastor Bob Dahm's 2019 Compensation Package; David seconded; motion carried
5. Janelle Zurcher contacted Matt Main and will be helping with the confirmation class

6. Established 2019 proposed budget
7. Set the annual meeting for January 20, 2019
8. Christmas Eve Service for Immanuel will remain at 4:00 this year, however time may change next year
9. Acolyte sticks will be replaced (2)-48" stick, \$90 apiece, money will be used from the memorial fund
10. Discussed posting alter care and usher duties at church and on the church website
11. Voeltz family plans to continue tradition of donating fruit at the Children's Christmas Program.

Jodi made motion to adjourn the meeting; Monica seconded; motion carried.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 7:00 pm

Respectfully submitted by Ranae Demulling, Church Council Secretary

Assisting with Worship at Immanuel: December 2018

Altar Care	Ushers	Cleaning
December: Gin DeBoer and Tiff Bonte	December: Gin DeBoer and Tiff Bonte	December: Gin DeBoer and Tiff Bonte

If you are unable to serve as scheduled please find a replacement and notify the church office.
Please check the sign-up sheets posted on the bulletin board. Your help will be appreciated.

PARISH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES – DECEMBER 2018

Birthdays				Anniversaries	
Wilson		Immanuel		Wilson	
Dec 2	Trenton Faber	Dec 1	Matthew Main	Dec 4	Sandy & Terry Thorsen
Dec 5	Dalton Faber	Dec 1	Verdell Voeltz		
Dec 5	Arlan Hague	Dec 3	Joe Swanepoel		
Dec 15	Gary Peterson	Dec 5	Jodi Voeltz		
Dec 15	Curt Gregg	Dec 5	Lauren Cassellius		
Dec 19	Barbara Knopps	Dec 7	Brandon Brahmer	Immanuel	
Dec 20	Kent Butler	Dec 8	Barb Voeltz	Dec 1	Nathan & Janette Marlett
Dec 20	Nicole Spielman	Dec 10	Vera Steinberger	Dec 5	Devin & Brandee Swenby
Dec 21	Dave Powers	Dec 10	Samantha Phillipps	Dec 16	Roger & Joyce Ohman
Dec 21	Braden Gregg	Dec 11	Rick Steinberger		
Dec 30	Joni Finder	Dec 12	Gail Voeltz		
Dec 30	Bradyn Lamb	Dec 14	Joshua Melstrom		
Dec 31	DeeAnn Rambo	Dec 16	Michael Mortenson		
		Dec 17	Elijah Eggert		
		Dec 17	Vickie Haglund		
		Dec 17	Christopher Main		
		Dec 20	Henry Tellijohn		
		Dec 22	Andrew Blaser		
		Dec 26	Laura Briesemeister		

NEWSLETTER / CALENDAR AVAILABLE ON WEB SITE

The monthly newsletter and calendar are available in PDF format on the parish web site located at www.wilsonimmanuel.org. Click on the "Newsletter" and "Calendar" links in the menu bar at the top of the Home page. If you would like to receive links to the Web site versions of the calendar and newsletter by email each month, subscribe to the Parish Email List by completing "Subscribe for Updates" found on the lower right corner of the Home page

**Revised Common Lectionary
Daily Readings – Year C
December 2018**

Date	Day	Psalm	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
1	Saturday	Psalm 25:1-10	Nehemiah 9:26-31		Luke 21:20-24
2	Sunday	Psalm 25:1-10	Jeremiah 33:14-16	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-26
3	Monday	Psalm 90	Numbers 17:1-11	2 Peter 3:1-18	
4	Tuesday	Psalm 90	2 Samuel 7:18-29	Revelation 22:12-16	
5	Wednesday	Psalm 90	Isaiah 1:24-31		Luke 11:29-32
6	Thursday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:5-12	Philippians 1:12-18a	
7	Friday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:13-18	Philippians 1:18b-26	
8	Saturday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 4:1-6		Luke 9:1-6
9	Sunday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:1-4	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
10	Monday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 40:1-11	Romans 8:22-25	
11	Tuesday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 19:18-25	2 Peter 1:2-15	
12	Wednesday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 35:3-7		Luke 7:18-30
13	Thursday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 6:1-8	2 Corinthians 8:1-15	
14	Friday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 8:4-12	2 Corinthians 9:1-15	
15	Saturday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 9:8-15		Luke 1:57-66
16	Sunday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
17	Monday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Numbers 16:1-19	Hebrews 13:7-17	
18	Tuesday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Numbers 16:20-35	Acts 28:23-31	
19	Wednesday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Micah 4:8-13		Luke 7:31-35
20	Thursday	Psalm 80:1-7	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Hebrews 10:10-18	
21	Friday	Psalm 80:1-7	Isaiah 42:10-18	Hebrews 10:32-39	
22	Saturday	No Psalm	Micah 4:1-5	Ephesians 2:11-22	Luke 1:46b-55
23	Sunday	No Psalm	Micah 4:6-8	2 Peter 1:16-21	Luke 1:46b-55
24	Monday	Psalm 96	Isaiah 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
25	Tuesday	Psalm 98	Isaiah 52:7-10	Hebrews 1:1-12	John 1:1-14
26	Wednesday	Psalm 148	2 Chronicles 24:17-24	Acts 6:1-7; 7:51-60	
27	Thursday	Psalm 148	Proverbs 8:32-36		John 21:19b-24
28	Friday	Psalm 148	Isaiah 54:1-13	Revelation 21:1-7	
29	Saturday	Psalm 147:12-20	1 Chronicles 28:1-10	1 Corinthians 3:10-17	
30	Sunday	Psalm 148	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Colossians 3:12-17	Luke 2:41-52
31	Monday	Psalm 147:12-20	1 Kings 3:5-14		John 8:12-19

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Prayer Ventures
December 2018**

1 *World AIDS Day* Today we remember and pray for people who have died from AIDS-related illnesses and people who are living with HIV; we give thanks for the progress made in prevention, treatment and care, and ask for an awareness of what still needs to be done; and we ask God to help our church continue in its work with partners and organizations around the world to eradicate AIDS and support people who live with HIV.

2 *First Sunday of Advent* Give thanks and praise for God's promises fulfilled in the gift of Jesus Christ, a gift for all humanity that changed everything and continues to stir faith, newness of spirit, peace, compassion and justice in the world.

3 Pray for the recovery and well-being of those affected by recent hurricanes, flooding, wildfires and other natural disasters, especially for families, people living in poverty, older adults and communities with scarce resources.

4 Ask for help in knowing and following God's ways and paths – paths that are mercy, love and faithfulness.

5 Give thanks for the generous support of ELCA members and congregations in response to *The Campaign for the ELCA* and its priorities: congregations, leadership, hunger and poverty, and the global church. Pray our commitments and generosity continue for supporting and investing in the future of this church, deepening our relationships, and expanding existing and new ministries that serve our neighbors and communities here and around the world.

6 Give thanks for Lutheran Services in America, an alliance of the ELCA and over 300 health and human services organizations serving the complex, diverse needs of more than 6 million people each year in the United States and the Caribbean.

7 Lighting and reflecting on the glow of candles in Advent wreaths is an enduring tradition for many people around the world that marks our remembrance of Jesus' birth and the gift of eternal life. Give thanks to God for sending the true light and hope of Christ into the world and into our lives.

8 Thank God for the joy, encouragement and strength of faith we receive from one another gathered in our congregations – communities of faith that send us into the world equipped to care for our neighbor and to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

9 Praise God for the good news of Jesus Christ, our savior who comes to us in the wilderness and darkness of the world to bring light, truth and salvation for all.

10 Over 68 million people around the world have been displaced from their homes by war, violence, disasters and persecution. Pray for the safety, care and well-being of people who have fled or been forced from their homes and countries, that they have resources to meet their daily needs and find welcoming, supportive communities and congregations to help them find stability and pursue their hopes and dreams.

11 Remember in prayer ELCA missionaries accompanying our companions in Estonia, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Switzerland; pray the Holy Spirit will inspire and sustain their faith and work of sharing the gospel, growing the church and serving our neighbor.

12 In this season of buying and sharing gifts, pray God will help us rethink – for the sake of the world – our traditions, habits and generosity through the influence, opportunities and far-reaching impacts of ELCA World Hunger and ELCA Good Gifts.

13 Pray for neighboring congregations and ministries, pastors, synod staff, ecumenical partners and leaders who work together with us to share the gospel, serve our neighbors and communities and grow the church.

14 Ask God to help us shape and renew our congregations to be life-giving and imaginative places for people of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and circumstances to gather around God's word and the sacraments, practice hospitality, build relationships and care for the needs of our neighbor – friend or stranger, member or not.

15 Pray for the new Lutheran Men in Mission Disaster Relief Effort, which organizes men to share their skills, experiences and resources to work alongside Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran social services, local agencies, communities, individuals and families to repair and rebuild homes damaged by natural disasters.

16 Pray the Holy Spirit will strengthen and embolden us to invite others to have faith in the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and to be compelling witnesses to God's ways, truth, justice and mercy in the world.

17 Remember during the holidays people who are in prisons, jails, correctional facilities and detention centers; pray we are active in connecting them with caring communities of faith, their families and children, and resources for rebuilding their hope and lives; pray our compassion is stirred by the Spirit that we freely share with those who are imprisoned the good news of forgiveness, hope and new life we have in Jesus Christ – the gift of God's love for all people.

18 Ask that the Holy Spirit guide us in being attentive and supportive of pastors, leaders and church staff during Advent and Christmas, that their faith will be strengthened, their needs cared for, and that they will find time to reflect on the light and joy of Jesus Christ in their own lives.

19 Pray for the safety and protection of all who are traveling during the holidays.

20 Remember in prayer first responders, firefighters, doctors and nurses, military, law enforcement and care providers working the holidays for our safety and well-being; pray for people who serve the public in retail stores, restaurants, and the hospitality and travel industries; and pray they all find opportunities for renewal and time with the family, friends and communities that enrich their lives and faith.

21 During the past year, the ELCA and the Episcopal Church have been committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty. Remember to continue praying for these concerns, our leaders and people in need.

22 Pray that during our congregational activities, worship, gift sharing and community meals we remember to reach out and involve individuals and families confined to home or care facilities, without family or friends, homeless or forgotten.

23 God's presence and the ways in which the Holy Spirit works in our lives can catch us by surprise and unprepared just as it did pregnant Elizabeth and Mary. Ask God to open our hearts, minds and senses to the

amazing, subtle and life-changing things that God is accomplishing in the world, often through us.

24 *Christmas Eve* Pray we are childlike in our faith and excitement for the birth of Christ – a gift of light that no darkness can overcome, a gift for us that is full of life, grace and truth.

25 *Christmas Day* Glory to God in the highest! Give thanks and praise to God for the birth of Jesus Christ, the son of God, who lived among us full of grace and truth, that God's love for humankind might be clear, tangible and revealed in ways that speak to our human needs and senses – then and now.

26 Pray we exercise daily unbiased generosity with all the gifts, resources and abilities God has entrusted to our care and use.

27 Talk to students who are on break, recognize their presence and affirm the gifts they share with the body of Christ; pray they are renewed during their break and J-term experiences, and assure them they are not forgotten and are remembered in our personal prayers as well as those of the congregation.

28 Just as Mary and Elizabeth gave testimony to what God was doing in their lives for the sake of the world, pray that we, too, are articulate about what we trust God is doing in our lives and the world – during the ups, downs and times that puzzle us.

29 Ask that the Holy Spirit guide and inspire our church as it reflects on and makes plans for the present and future, seeking to be ever faithful, centered in the gospel, wise and nimble in doing God's work in the world as it shifts and changes.

30 We gather in congregations to worship God, learn, grow in faith and care for and equip one another for living as followers of Christ in the world. Pray we each contribute to the vitality of our faith community, strive for unity, and help each other move beyond the walls of our buildings and into our communities and world with a fervor to serve our neighbor and share the gospel.

31 A new year is at hand! Pray we are not swept into it with anger, vindictiveness, division, apathy or fear, but rather with hearts open to the word of Christ dwelling in us and lives that shine brightly with compassion, kindness, humility, forgiveness, patience and an eagerness to work together for unity.

DECEMBER 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
<p>2 <i>Food Pantry Sunday</i> Holy Communion 8:30 @ Immanuel SS: 9:30 @ Immanuel 10:30 @ Wilson SS: 9:30 @ Wilson</p>	<p>3 Pastor's Sabbath Day</p>	4	<p>5 6:00 Immanuel Confirmation Meeting 6:00 Wilson Confirmation at St. John's</p>	<p>6 Pastor Time Off →</p>	7	8
<p>9 Pastor Time Off 8:30 @ Immanuel SS: 9:30 @ Immanuel 10:30 @ Wilson SS: 9:30 @ Wilson</p>	<p>10 Pastor's Sabbath Day</p>	<p>11 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting at Immanuel</p>	<p>12 6:00 Confirmation at Immanuel 6:00 Wilson Confirmation at St. John's</p>	<p>13 9:30 a.m. WELCA Mtg. at Wilson 12:30 p.m. Council Meeting at Wilson</p>	14	15
<p>16 Holy Communion 8:30 @ Immanuel SS: 9:30 @ Immanuel 6:00 P.M. SS Christmas Program at Immanuel 10:30 @ Wilson SS: 9:30 @ Wilson Newsletter Deadline</p>	17	<p>18 Pastor Day Off</p>	<p>19 7:00 Longest Night Service of Healing and Hope at Immanuel 6:00 Wilson Confirmation at St. John's</p>	20	21	22
<p>23 8:30 @ Immanuel No SS at Immanuel 10:30 @ Wilson SS: 9:30 @ Wilson SS Christmas Program during Worship at Wilson</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Worship Service: 2:00 p.m. at Wilson 4:00 p.m. at Immanuel</p>	<p>25 MERRY CHRISTMAS No Worship Service</p>	<p>26 NO CONFIRMATION AT ST. JOHN'S OR IMMANUEL</p>	27	28	29
<p>30 Holy Communion 8:30 @ Immanuel No SS at Immanuel 10:30 @ Wilson No SS at Wilson</p>	<p>31 Pastor's Sabbath Day</p>	<p>January 1 HAPPY NEW YEAR</p>	<p>2 NO CONFIRMATION AT ST. JOHN'S OR IMMANUEL</p>	3	4	5