



**DECEMBER 2024**



**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA**

631 Grand Street, Allegan Michigan



**Bob Teske - December 6**  
**Michele Radke - December 8**  
**Linda Scott - December 11**  
**Pr. Dan Ward - December 11**  
**Russell Davis - December 13**  
**Michael Aksamit - December 15**  
**Sandy Horwath - December 18**  
**Kaylee Haas - December 19**  
**Trevor Horwath - December 27**  
**Mallory Horwath - December 29**





**Keith & Linda Scott - December 14**

**Bill & Jessie Cronkhite - December 15**



## **WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS FOR NOVEMBER**

### **December 1**

Reader - Linda Havens  
Assistant - Jim Horwath  
Counters - Ken Kingsbury & Linda Scott  
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **December 8**

Reader - Linda Scott  
Assistant - Donna Preisler  
Counters - Joyce Davis & Mike Aksamit  
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **December 15**

Reader - Sharon Aksamit  
Assistant - Mike Aksamit  
Counters - Laura Compton & Linda Scott  
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **December 22**

Reader - Michele Radke  
Assistant - Mike Fusillo  
Counters - Joyce Davis & Jim Combs  
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

### **December 29**

Reader - Donna Preisler  
Assistant - Rick Bierlein  
Counters - Laura Compton & Ken Kingsbury  
Greeters - Jim & Marie Combs

**WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS:** We really appreciate everyone that serves during our worship service and would love to have more people involved. If you would like to serve as a reader, worship assistant, counter, or greeter, please talk to Pastor Chris or Ken Kingsbury. We can be reached in the office Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 1pm.



December 2024

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.

- Luke 2:1-4

*If you find my first paragraph boring, skip it.*

The smart people (Biblical scholars) tell us that Luke is placing the story in the larger context of what he understands to be world history, as the word that Luke uses for “world” is the same word that we use to describe Christians of different stripes (denominations) working together: ecumenical (οἰκουμένη). It literally means “the whole inhabited (civilized) world.” Luke also wants to reinforce for us that Joseph, Jesus’ father, is descended from David (even though he made that point repeatedly in chapter 1).

But I think there’s a greater point that we miss in the Christmas story: the Holy Family, who are peasants, have to get by in the real world.

Caesar Augustus, who does NOT know Joseph or Mary and does not care about them at all (though he’s probably heard of the Jews in general) issues a decree. Mary and Joseph heed their emperor’s orders, even though it’s not a great time for them as a family. Child birth is risky now – it was much worse then, especially when traveling.

The most powerful man in their world orders around everyone in it, and the peasants from the back woods, back water part of the empire do as their told.

Were they happy about it? Did they grumble all the way? Did Mary complain about her aching back while Joseph worried? Luke doesn't tell us. He just tells us that they went.

Caesar does not know our God; not only does he worship other gods, he insists that the whole inhabited (civilized) world worship him **AS** a god.

And still our God, the One True God, moves through this heathen emperor, and Jesus comes into the world, as God told us he would through the Prophet Micah (Micah 5:2-3).

The powerful and connected still run the world (or so they think). They still give orders while the rest of try to get along. They still not don't care how their actions impact those at the bottom.

But God does.

Because God is one of them.

And God still works through the powerful, those who understand themselves to order the lives of others. And God still minds the peasants, those who trust in God because they have no where else to turn. And God still comes to us, as a peasant who was born to die for us.

Caesar gave orders, and Mary and Joseph jumped. And God was born in our world as peasant baby. As God planned from the beginning.

SDG,

Pr. Chris



## CHRISTMAS FAMILIES

As in past years, we'll collect gifts and meals for two families for Christmas; and like last year, there will be a tree with tags you can pull off to buy items for those families.

UNLIKE PAST YEARS, however, we did not receive many names, so among the tags you will find:

Potatoes  
Canned Corn  
Canned Green Beans  
Stuffing  
Macaroni and Cheese  
Gravy  
Corn Muffin Mix  
Cream of Chicken Soup  
Green Beans  
Crispy Fried Onions  
(Brand names don't matter)

We know this is a switch from previous years, but we did not receive large households with lots of names, so we're trying something different this year.

#### BREAKFAST AND DINNER CONFIRMATION FUNDRAISERS:

Our confirmands will go to Confirmation Camp this summer, and while I am encouraging the council to include part of the cost in our 2025 budget, we have agreed that the confirmands will host fundraisers between now and then. The first two will be in December, and they will both ask for a free will offering.

Saturday, 7 December, 9 – 11am. Pancake Breakfast.

Saturday, 21 December, 5 – 7pm. Dinner. The menu is still in flux.

Why two? Because we will repeat (monthly) whichever gains more traction (raises more money for the Confirmands). 😊

#### POTENTIAL NEW YEARS RESOLUTION???

Looking for a New Year's Resolution???

How about this: “when my travels take me away from home for a weekend, I will worship in a local congregation”???

While we have not always enjoyed every aspect of worship (it's hard not to think “why do they do it *that way*?” or “it would have been nice if they warned us *that was coming*”), we have always found something that we have appreciated and made us glad that we attended.

## WORSHIP CHANGE FOR ADVENT

The prayers of intercession will change for Advent. This change will only last the four Sundays of Advent. They will return to normal for Christmas. No, I will not tell you what the change will be because (a) I want you to pay attention and (b) I haven't finished working on them yet. 😊

## DAILY REFLECTION

For Advent, I will post / publish a daily reflection based on the daily lectionary on our Facebook and YouTube pages.





## ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

**Quilting Group** meets every Tuesday in the Quilting Room at 9am.

**Bible Study Group** meets every Wednesday at 10am in the Study Room. We discuss the Bible Readings for the upcoming Sunday Worship Service. We will NOT meet on Christmas Day

**Praise Team** Practice meets every Wednesday at 4pm. Watch the Bulletin and the church web page for changes during the holidays.

**Coffee for Vets** meets on the second Tuesday of every month in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and fellowship. If you know of a Vet who might like to participate, please invite them.

**BIBLE AND BREW** will meet Monday December 9<sup>th</sup> at the Trestle Stop in Hamilton. We meet at 6pm for a meal, fellowship, and a lively discussion on random questions on a wide variety of subjects. It is a lot of fun and we hope to see you there.

**BOOK GROUP** will meet Monday December 23<sup>th</sup> at 1pm to discuss the book chosen for this month. Members of the group suggest and decide on which book they will read for the following month. Watch the Sunday Bulletin for the announcement of the November selection.

**Zumba** meets in the Fellowship Hall every Wednesday at 6pm and every Saturday at 10am.

**Dinner Nite Out** will take place Saturday December 21st at 5:30pm. The hosts for December will be the Confirmation Class and will be at the church. This is part of their fundraising to enable them to attend an outing at Stoney Lake. Please plan to attend and support our *fantastic* young people.

## ***EVENTS CONTINUED:***

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:** We will hold our meeting immediately after the worship service on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. *Please* have any and all reports for this meeting in the church office no later than Tuesday December 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will prepare the information packets and email them out by Thursday December 5<sup>th</sup>. If you are not on the church email list and would like an advance copy, please contact Ken Kingsbury in the church office.



**CONFIRMATION CLASS BREAKFAST:** As part of their fundraising efforts for the youth outing at Stoney Lake the Confirmands will be serving breakfast for us on the morning of Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be a signup sheet on the round table to give us an estimate of how many will attend. Bring your friends and family.

**HANGING OF THE GREENS:** We will gather in the sanctuary at 4pm on Saturday December 7<sup>th</sup> to decorate the church for Christmas. It will be followed by a light meal in the Fellowship Hall and the Kids will have a very special visitor.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2025** have been placed in your church mailbox. If you did not receive a set of envelopes and would like a set, please see Ken Kingsbury in the church office.



## **GOD'S GARDEN**

A big thank you to everyone that helped with God's Garden during summer and fall. We put in a lot of hours, one hour at a time, but sometimes getting 10 to 12 hours worth of work done each time we gathered. Maybe you brought tools to use, treats to eat afterwards, pulled weeds or put down mulch. Whatever your contribution, every bit of it was appreciated and we look forward to picking up where we left off next year. Thanks to Jim Horwath who lead us each week with tasks to complete and thanks to everyone else for embracing this new way of taking care of our property which is God's Garden!

We just had to share these photos. The Garden is all prepped for our spring projects. We would like your input on what you would like to see planted.





**Grady Armourillo** is a 12-year-old baptized in Immanuel Lutheran Church. He attends L.E.White Middle School in Allegan as a 6th grader. Grady loves school. Currently, he has all As and works hard in class. Right now his favorite class is foods. He is now making new food creations at home.

Grady loves all things outside. He loves rocks and cracking them open and see what's inside. Grady loves soccer. He currently plays on Midwest 2012 Boys White team. He is a goalie. He will play Futsal 12 Boys Royal team in the winter. Grady likes to chat with friends on the phone and play games.

Grady's favorite food is broccoli cheddar soup and turkey subs. His favorite color is dark yellow. His favorite candy bar is KitKat. Grady is our creative, loving entertainer. He is a curious soul and typically has many questions about the world we live in.

