

# ITEMS



Volume 62 No. 01

January 2020

## Upcoming Events

Jan 06: Men of the Word, 7pm

Jan 06: 2020-21 Preschool  
Registration for Members

Jan 09: Women's Bible Study, 9:15am

Jan 09: Serving at St. Matthew's

Jan 09: Ruth Society Meeting

Jan 12: Preschool Parents Pause

Jan 13: Women of the Word, 7pm

Jan 21-22: ILP Chapel Days

Feb 01: Spaghetti Dinner, Bingo  
& Preschool Art Show

## Annual Spaghetti Dinner & Bingo Night Meets Preschool Art Fair & Silent Auction

By Lyn Thorne & Linda Marquadt



**Men of the Word Bible Study**  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, 7pm  
(Class Begins Jan 6th)

**Women of the Word Bible Study**  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays, 7pm  
(Class Begins Jan 13th)

**People of the Word Bible Study**  
5<sup>th</sup> Monday, 7pm (Men & Women)

**Women's Morning Bible Study**  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays, 9:15 am

**Adult Bible Study / God's Kids Club**  
Sundays, 10:15 am – All Welcome!



**Did you snap a photo  
at one of our events?**

Please share it with us  
by emailing it to:

[office@immanuelmokena.org](mailto:office@immanuelmokena.org)

Back by popular demand, the Annual Spaghetti Dinner, Art Show, Bingo Bash, and Silent Auction will take place on Saturday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. Dinner will be served from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm with bingo immediately following dinner and the art will be on display throughout the main floor from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to participate in the Preschool silent auction and there will be a limited number of art projects available for sale to the public. All proceeds for the Preschool Art Show & Silent Auction go directly to help with playground maintenance and new rugs.

Tickets for the dinner will be \$10.00 for Adults, \$4.00 for children ages 4-12 and children under the age of 4 will be free. Tickets will be on sale after services in January or in the church office during normal business hours.

If you are willing to help in any way, please sign up in the Opportunity Book in the Narthex/Lobby. Also, the preschool is looking for new, unused items to be auctioned off.

Some of the great silent auction items won last year were rides to school in a firetruck/police car, messages on the Immanuel marquee street sign and a vast array of gift baskets that included services or items. We look forward to seeing you there.

## SERVING THE LIVING LORD AT IMMANUEL

**Mission Statement:** "Caring and sharing since 1850, the mission of the family of God at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mokena is to effectively teach the Word of God, promote the spiritual growth of the Christian family, and continuously reach out with love and service."

Connecting people in loving relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit, with each other in contagious Christian community, and with our calling of servanthood in the world.

## Financial Summary

YOY Comparison	NOV 2019	2019 YTD	2018 YTD	YOY Change	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Offering	24,545	312,603	289,721	22,882	8
Interest	97	2,176	1,927	249	13
Facility		5,190	4,800	390	8
Expense	24,279	317,220	251,572	65,648	26
<b>Balance</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>2,749</b>	<b>44,876</b>	<b>-42,127</b>	<b>-94</b>

*\* Reduced 2018 expenses primarily attributed to not having a full-time Pastor*

## Weekly Attendance

### 5:00 pm Saturday Services

Dec 07.....50    Dec 21.....41

Dec 14.....48    Dec 28.....44

### 9:00 am Sunday Services

Dec 08.....78    Dec 22.....81

Dec 15.....53    Dec 29.....51

### Mid-Week Advent      Christmas Worship

Dec 04.....45      Dec 24, 4pm.....149

Dec 11.....40      Dec 24, 10pm.....93

Dec 18.....40      Dec 25, 10am.....39

**Baptized Membership: 751**

**Confirmed Membership: 600**

**Households: 372**

## January Worship Schedule

### Saturday Worship (5 pm)

Contemporary: 4, 11, 18

Traditional: 25

### Sunday Worship (9 am)

Traditional: 5, 12, 26

Blended: 19

## Bulletin & Items Publishing

Bulletin articles are due on Wednesdays by 9 a.m.

Articles for the February Items are due by **January 23** and will be on our website, mailed, and in the lobby after **February 1**. The Items Newsletter is also available online at **immanuelmokena.org**

## Official Acts

### First Communion - December 15:

Alyssa Bell, Tyler Bell, Ben Howard, Riley Saltzmann, Jarred Schellhas, Natalee Schellhas, and Paige Seivert

### Memorial Service - December 27:

Roy LaRocco ( Oct 03, 1952 - Dec 12, 2019)

## Elders

Immanuel has elders who assist the pastor during the worship service and outside of worship. Their job is to be of service to you in any cares/concerns you may have with the congregation and within your family. Here are your elders:

**Elder 1: Marty Olsen 815-464-4373**

**Elder 2: Jim Bubeck 815-469-7573**

**Elder 3: Bruce Bechtel 815-485-5455**

**Elder 4: Nick Whittier 815-485-9269**

**Elder 5: Jerry Vrshek 815-469-5059 (Director)**

*Please contact these Elders should you have any needs/concerns/questions.*



**Have you moved or has your contact**

## information changed recently?

If the answer is yes, please call or email the church office with your new information so you don't miss out on our communications for church events/info!

## Church Office Contact Information:

708-479-5600 | [office@immanuelmokena.org](mailto:office@immanuelmokena.org)

## Donations To Special Groups

*Please follow the below instructions for submitting donations via check to any of the following groups.*

### GROUP

**Rays of HOPE**

**God's Kids Club**

**Ruth Society**

### MAKE CHECK PAYABLE

**Rays Of Hope**

**Immanuel Lutheran**

*Include on Memo: God's Kids Club*

**Ruth Society**

*\* For Special Group Donations: Clearly write on the outside of your offering envelope where the funds should be designated.*



## CONVERSATION STARTERS FROM THE PASTOR

### 1-2-3 (Part 3)

(January 2020)

“FOMO” is a pretty common concept in our culture these days. The “fear of missing out” is strong, especially

during a season flush with opportunities to celebrate, enjoy, even indulge. The one-two punch of Christmas and New Years can have a dramatic effect on our wallets and our waistlines, and yet, we may still feel like we missed out on some treat or trinket along the way. “I mean, who really just takes ONE bite of their (new) favorite Christmas cookie...and throws out the rest?” Or “Who in their right mind could possibly resist buying just ONE more little toy, for the opportunity to watch a child’s/grandchild’s eyes brighten with delight? The cost is insignificant compared to that feeling!”

So we eat the whole cookie, before finding a new favorite. We buy the toy and are surprised how quickly that twinkle of delight dissolves from the child’s face. Did we miss out on something? Was it worth the cost? We’ll never know. Then again, we won’t wait to find out. On to the next thing!

While the concept of FOMO, developed by Harvard MBA Patrick J. McGinnis, was originally aimed at companies that overreach in their desire to capture a part of their market, it certainly developed a life of its own in popular culture. FOMO has been used to justify any kind of consumerism or hedonism imaginable. Similar to YOLO (“you only live once”) in its sentiment, the fear of missing out on life, REAL life (whatever that looks like) drives us to consume, consume, consume, both goods and experiences.

And where do we find ourselves, at the end of this way of thinking, believing, and behaving? Some have put it this way: “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” It’s a pretty bleak outlook on life, and pretty closely echoes the nihilism that seems to echo throughout most of the book of Ecclesiastes. Solomon had access to all the goods and experiences of his day, and he found it all to be “futile, a pursuit of the wind” (1:14, CSB). And the truth is, if we’re just looking for our next material “fix” with which to satisfy our cravings, our lives will be quite meaningless, indeed.

But you and I know that that is NOT the life for which the Father created us! It’s not the life that

Jesus died for...He died not so that we could carry on in meaninglessness, but could pursue the meaning of following Him, imitating Him in loving others like He did. That life, the full, abundant life that God desires for us (and that we desire deep down inside, even if we’re unwilling to admit it) is living in complete and full harmony with the Spirit of Jesus in us. It’s not a life of “stuff” or “me.” It’s a life of relationships, an everyday investment in connections that are begun here in time and continue on into eternity. Now THAT’s meaningful! Something that never dies!

It turns out that if we’re feeling like we’re missing out on something good, the answer is probably that there’s a relationship in our life that needs more intentionality and focus. So that we don’t miss out on the fullness of being human, even in a broken world, Jesus shows us the way by His pattern of life. He has a strong relationship with His Father, and makes Him a priority. He invests the fullness of His life in a close group of followers, His disciples, to whom He gives a fuller picture of the Kingdom as they journey each day together. And He makes Himself accessible to the community at large. He engages in three key relationships: with His Father, with His disciples, and anyone who was looking for Him.

If we’re observant of Jesus’ patterns and intentional about following Him, then our treasured relationships will follow a similar template. We’ll spend time with God. We’ll invest in the lives of people who know Jesus and follow Him. And by the power of the Holy Spirit, we’ll be on the lookout for people to whom God is sending us, people who don’t yet know how much Jesus loves them. By investing in these three key relationships, we’ll be following the two Great Commandments Jesus gave us: love God, love people.

Many people search despairingly for a life devoid of FOMO, when what they’re looking for can genuinely be found in the patterns of intentional relationships that Jesus demonstrated in His own life. I can tell you from personal experience that in the moments when I feel least fulfilled in life, one of these key relationships has faded into the background. I’m guessing you’re not much different from me. But the great thing about relationships is that by God’s grace, and through the power of Jesus’ resurrection, they’re eternal, begun in time, going on forever. The Spirit perpetually mends, renews, and grows these relationships. He’s even capable of placing people in our paths to



whom God is sending us, to love like He does. My prayer for us all in 2020 is that we have eyes to see God working in the world, strengthening old relationships and creating new, and that He inspires and encourages us to join Him where He's already working.

*Adventure is out there! Pastor Aaron*

P.S. Keep your eyes peeled for more information on Joining Jesus...a journey we'll take together during Lent 2020.



## 2020 Altar Flower Sign-Up Sheets Have Been Released!

Check the Opportunity Book to sign up today for dates in 2020! We appreciate the congregation's generosity in helping to beautify the altar for each service throughout the year.

*Please make checks payable to **Ruth Society** and do not forget to fill out the message portion that will be included in the bulletin. Place checks in offering plate or Mailbox D1 by the church office.*

(1) Bouquet = \$20 / (2) Bouquets = \$40

## Women of the Word By Leeann Schellhas

We will resume on Monday, January 13 at 7 pm. We have been journeying through the book of Mark and will pick up our discussion in the middle of chapter 6. On the second and fourth Mondays of each month, we meet in the Library to lean into

God's Word together. We engage in a conversation that focuses on what the text is saying and how that applies to us. Hope you'll consider joining us in the new year!

**JOIN OUR  
BIBLE  
STUDY**



## Men of the Word

By Rev. Aaron Schellhas

Men of the Word will begin again on January 6. Come join us for a

lively discussion, using the lens of the foundational documents of our church body, the Lutheran Confessions. They tell an important part of our story as Lutheran Christians, and still inform and inspire our faith and life today. For the 6th, we will be discussing the readings from Week 11 from the reading plan on page xxxiv. Hope to see you there!



## Save the Date: Vacation Bible School 2020! By Nancy Kaczmarczyk

The theme for Vacation Bible School at Immanuel in 2020 will be "Rocky Railway – Jesus' Power Pulls us through". The VBS that's just the ticket! Climb

aboard for mountains of fun at Rocky Railway! On this faith-filled adventure, kids discover that trusting Jesus pulls them through life's ups and downs. Plans are to hold VBS the week of June 15 – 19. We will need your help for this most important outreach to share the love of Jesus with the children in our community. More details to follow. Please keep our VBS ministry in your prayers.

## Ruth Society Christmas Party

By Barb Belanski



The December 2019 Ruth Society Meeting had their annual Christmas celebration with a party held at Little Joe's in Frankfort. Seventeen women were in attendance including two guests. Everyone was sparkly and ready to kick off the Christmas season. The tables were glistening with candles and lights – and the food was

delicious with peppermint ice cream for dessert – so yummy!

Many thanks for all the monetary donations of \$130 and toys and gifts given to My Joyful Heart. Everyone was so generous.

President Bev began the evening with a Christmas devotion and table prayer.

The evening ended with an array of games, laughter and fun. Many thanks to the Christmas committee for hosting such a festive party.



## 2020 Offering Envelopes

Please be sure to pickup your envelopes in the lobby or your church mailbox. Didn't receive envelopes? Please contact the church office at [office@immanuelmokena.org](mailto:office@immanuelmokena.org)



## Poinsettia's Adorn The Altar

*By Mary Oesterreich*

The Ruth Society wants to thank the congregation for the purchase of Poinsettias. The Church was beautifully decorated for the Christmas Season. We are very thankful for those who helped decorate.

## Time & Talent *By Sarah Bechtel*

Our time and talent forms will be distributed the weekends of January 12th and 19th. As you begin a new year, how is God calling you to use your time and talents in service to Him and others? What gifts has He blessed you with? Many of us struggle with finding the time to do everything in front of us — please pray for God's guidance. We will collect the forms the weekend of January 26th.

## Immanuel Bookstore *By Sarah Bechtel*



Stop in the church library and check out the new "bookstore"! Various books are available for purchase — each is individually marked with the price. One item you will find is the Red Letter Challenge book — if you missed this experience last spring or want to share it with a friend, you can pick up a book right here! All you need to do is write your name and the name of the book on an envelope (provided) and insert payment (check or exact cash). Leave the envelope in mailbox A2.

## Serving St. Matthew's Soup Kitchen



On each of our visits, we are humbled and thankful for God's blessings on this ministry. Our next visit is planned for **January 9th**. Everyone is invited to join us — we leave Immanuel about

10:45am and are back to Mokena by 2:00pm —

please call Barb at 708.995.5375 if you are interested in joining us.

**2020 Serving Dates:** 2/13; 3/12; 4/9; 5/14; 6/11; 7/9; 8/13; 9/10; 10/8; 11/12; 12/10

## Lutheran Women in Mission



Your mite box offerings are helping to fund ten mission grants selected at the LWML NID 2018 convention. To view these grants visit our website,

select Serve, and click World. Help yourself to a mite box — your whole family is invited to participate. Thank you for supporting our Northern Illinois District and National LWML mission grants — you are a blessing to so many!!!

Mite offerings are collected on the first weekend of the month in the large mite box in our narthex. **Next Mite Box Collection: February 1st / 2nd**. Thank you for supporting LWML — your gifts are a blessing to many!

## Adult Membership Class *By Pastor Aaron*



We are forming a new adult membership class. It will be held **Saturday, January 25, 2020 and Saturday, February 15th from 8:30am – 12pm**. Whether you have questions about Christ or want to deepen your faith in Him, this class will explore what the Bible says about our God, and how His love gives direction and meaning to your life today and forever. This class is designed for those who are interested in learning or reviewing the foundations of the Christian faith. Attendance at the class may lead to membership in our church, but there are no obligations. Watch an introductory video at [www.lhm.org/GodConnects](http://www.lhm.org/GodConnects).

## Christian Symbol *(By: NewsletterNewsletter)*

**Cross on the Rock**— The rock is often used as a



symbol of the Lord, our strength and firm foundation. A cross rising from the rock echoes many Bible verses that proclaim Christ as the rock of salvation; for example, "He alone is my rock and my salvation ..." (Psalm

62:2, ESV).



## At Home With God (Source: NewsletterNewsletter)



Of all persons, the Christian should be best prepared for whatever the New Year brings. ... In Christ he has disposed of a thousand enemies that other men must face alone and unprepared. He can face his tomorrow cheerful and unafraid because yesterday he turned his feet into the ways of peace and today he lives in God. The man who has made God his dwelling place will always have a safe habitation. —A.W. Tozer



## Life Sunday (By: Sarah Bechtel)

January 19th is National Sanctity of Human Life Day. The Board of Stewardship invites the congregation to mark this day by blessing a local organization which is closely involved with the struggle to protect the unborn. Aid for Women has a south suburban office in Flossmoor as well as other Chicago-area locations. They help women understand their choices and offer many resources, including pregnancy tests, ultrasounds, counseling, and even a residential center for expectant mothers and new mothers and their children.

We will have a **free will door offering for Aid for Women on January 18th and 19th**, and they are also in need of baby clothes (sizes newborn through nine months) – especially boy baby clothes. We will collect **donations of new baby clothes on the weekends of January 19th and 26th**.

Thank you for any support you are able to provide.

## The Miraculous Transformation (By: Lyn Thorne)

Our journey in life is always impacted by our relationships. At Immanuel we are surrounded by people that give us wisdom, support and encouragement. We are better as a result of their encouragement, we are stronger as a result of their wisdom, and we are blessed because of their investments. One of the great joys of life is expressing gratitude to the people who have helped us to accomplish our dream. So a big Thank you to all of the people who made the Narthex/Lobby renovation adventure possible. Whether you worked tirelessly on this project or supported it in other ways, we want you to know that we appreciate your devotion to helping our vision take flight. After the installation of the Narthex T.V Monitor we will be completely finished. The transformation is truly amazing and we have had so many compliments. Thank you again for everything.



*Narthex/Lobby Before*



*New & Improved Narthex*





## We Were Bursting at the Seams with Love & Cookies at This Year's Cookie Walk Fundraiser

By Lyn Thorne

The Board of Fellowship would like to thank everyone that baked, and bought and helped with the event. With a record number of cookies to sell and a record amount of buyers, we raised more than ever before. To God be the Glory.



Thank you again to everyone that helped make this event so successful. We look forward to next year.



## LENTEN INSPIRATION

# Daily Led by the Spirit A Lenten Walk

*Teach me to do your will for you are my God;  
may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.  
Psalm 143:10*

**Featured Speaker: Rev. Dr. Allan R. Buss**

*President Northern Illinois District LCMS*

**Location: Our Savior Lutheran Church**

*1910 Black Road, Joliet, IL 60435*

**Date: Saturday, March 7, 2020**

**SAVE THE DATE - SAVE THE DATE - SAVE THE DATE**





# JANUARY

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

### Birthdays

01 Dee Culbertson	17 William Nagy
03 Evan Perrin	18 Sebastian Malley
04 Billy Nagy	19 Sherry Sharpe
06 Sophie Imlach	20 Audrey Brown
07 Callie Cernauskas	23 Mark Fuka
07 Garrett Flesch	24 Emily Baker
09 Max Loucks	24 Ted Obis
09 Candy Whittier	25 Matt Howard
10 Bruce Malm	25 Judy Mentzer
11 Savannah Bubeck	27 Amanda Hutson
11 Randy Krause	28 Ryan Klode
11 Marilyn Miller	28 Nicole Mackey
12 Nadia Kruspe	29 Dave Prosen
12 Nancy Mirocha	29 Kelly Zellars
13 Benjamin Rohder	30 Cathy Arenz
13 Marie Victor	30 Mackenzie Burke
14 Kate Garcia	30 Charlotte Imlach
15 Tiffany Dangman	30 Steve Magnani
15 Pat Eble	30 Steve Malm
16 Austin Bubeck	31 Harold Oesterreich

### Anniversaries

10 Bill & Carole Sluis	50 years
23 Rod & Naomi Nagy	60 years
25 Tom & Lisa Bartnik	35 years
25 Michael & Gina Dudczyk	27 years
26 Russ & Arianna Fleckenstein	29 years
27 Joe & Pam (Bakken) Miller	08 years

*We wish God's blessings on all these people celebrating a birthday or anniversary. If we have forgotten anyone's special day or it is in error, please contact the church office.*



By Linda Marquardt

### Save the Date: Annual Art Show & Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Please join us on February 1<sup>st</sup> for our annual preschool art show, raffles, bingo and spaghetti dinner. See article on front page! We are looking for NEW items to be auctioned off. The event will be held from 5-7pm and setup will take place on Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Preschool Registration 2020-2021

preschool registration



Are you looking or know someone who is looking for a preschool program for your 3 – 5 year olds? See below for registration dates for Immanuel's preschool.

### 2020-2021 ILP Registration Dates:

- Church Members: Jan 6
- Current Students: Jan 30 - Feb 4
- Alumni Siblings: Feb 5-10
- Public: Feb 11 at 9:30 am

### Upcoming Schedule

- 01/06:** Return to School from Christmas Break
- 01/12:** PAUSE for Preschool Parents  
(Women: 6-7:30pm & Men 8-9:30pm)
- 01/20:** No School – Martin Luther King Day
- 01/21:** Chapel Day (2day AM) 9:15am
- 01/22:** Chapel Day (5day & 3day AM & PM)  
9:15am & 12:30pm
- 01/30 & 01/31:** No School Parent/Teacher Conferences (Current Student Registration)



## **Sunday Morning at 8:00 AM on Chicago's CW station WPWR channel 50 (Comcast 184)**

Tel: (260) 471-LOVE (5683) | Toll-Free: (888) 286-8002

[www.worshipanew.org](http://www.worshipanew.org) (Sermon Summaries)

Email: [info@LMMinc.org](mailto:info@LMMinc.org)

**Lutheran Ministries Media, Inc.** 5 Martin Luther Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46825-4996  
Chicago and Northwest Indiana

### **January 5, 2020 – Second Sunday after Christmas \*The Epiphany of our Lord Observed**

Psalm 72:1-11; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

"The 'Aha' Moment" - Sermon Text: Ephesians 3:1-12 - Rev. Thomas Eggold

Epiphany means that in Christ and through faith in Him, we can share God's love and forgiveness with the people God brings into our lives. And as we bear witness to what God has given us in His Son, the Holy Spirit will work, hearts will be changed, and we will see the "Aha Moments" unfold right before our very eyes.

### **January 12, 2020 – First Sunday after the Epiphany \*The Baptism of Our Lord**

Psalm 29; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 3:13-17

"Baptized into Christ" - Sermon Text: Matthew 3:17 - Rev. Shayne Jonker

Jesus was baptized for you and for your salvation, to fulfill all righteousness on your behalf so that you, baptized into Him, might become the righteousness of God. Jesus becomes our sin in His baptism; we become His righteousness in our baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

### **January 19, 2020 – Second Sunday after the Epiphany**

Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42a

"Behold, the Lamb of God" - Sermon Text: John 1:29-42a - Rev. Paul Shoemaker

Who is Jesus to you? Many people have their own thoughts about this man. Some say He is a great teacher; others, a great philosopher; still others, the Son of God and Savior of the world. John the Baptist makes clear who Jesus is and what His purpose is.

### **January 26, 2020 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany**

Psalm 27; Matthew 4:12-25

"Have No Fear!" - Sermon Text: Psalm 27 - Rev. William Mueller

There are so many things in our daily existence that can cause fear. There is one person, however, who stops fear dead in its tracks: Jesus Christ, the righteous and loving Savior! Because He is our light and our salvation, whom shall we fear?