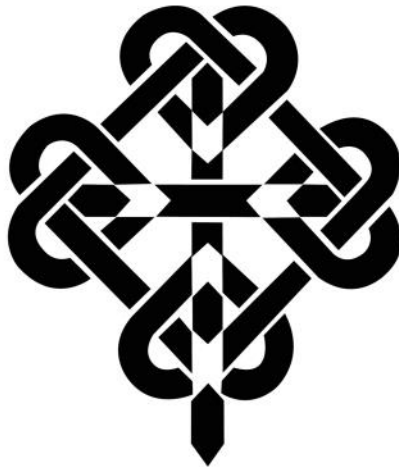


WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP

Immanuel

Presbyterian Church



*The whole body joined and knit together...
building itself up in love.
— Ephesians 4:16 —*

JANUARY 7, 2024

Who We Seek to Be

In our love for Christ and guided by God's Word we seek to be a community of

Joyful Worship, thoughtfully centered in the wonder and wisdom of the living God and celebrating the diversity of the body of Christ.

Loving Fellowship, encouraging and serving one another in the unifying love of the Holy Spirit.

Life-changing Learning, biblically-based preaching and teaching to equip children, youth, and adults to grow in their relationship with God.

Enthusiastic Service, reflecting the servant heart of Jesus as we proclaim the gospel near and far in word and deed.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

ANNETTE LAPLACA

PRELUDE: *What Child Is This?*

Arr. Derek K. Hakes

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O come, let us worship the Lord and consider what wondrous things
God has done:

All: The Magi who study the heavens follow a guiding star!

Leader: O come, let us worship the Lord and consider
what wondrous things God has done:

All: The peoples who live in the shadows see a glorious light!

Leader: O come, let us worship the Lord
and consider what wondrous things God has done:

All: The Christ who embodies the Word unveils the hidden plan,

Leader: making us joint heirs of the promise of salvation through the gospel!

All: O come, let us worship the Lord, for God has done wondrous things!

* INVOCATION

** Congregation stands.*

WE ARE RENEWED IN GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO CONFESSION

Leader: God is light, yet we have been so blind when truth has been so clear.

**People: When we could have looked ahead, we fell behind.
When we could have viewed the wider picture, we saw only a part.**

Leader: When we could have sensed the Spirit leading, we missed the way.

**People: We need forgiveness for our dim apprehension of love's clear leading.
We need faith that trusts when it cannot see,**

**All: We seek to walk in the light that lingers when all else fails;
We long to follow the bright Morning Star of our faith,
Jesus Christ, the Savior.**

Adapted from *The Worship Sourcebook*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.
To all who have received him, to those who believe in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God.

* SONG OF ACCLAMATION: *Holy, Holy, Holy* (Please stand)

Franz Schubert
(Communion book, p. 20)

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might;
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

* NICENE CREED

**All: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light
very God of very God,
begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father;
by whom all things were made;
who for us and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried;
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living
and the dead;
whose kingdom shall have no end.**

**And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;
who spoke by the prophets;
and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church;
we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
and we look for the resurrection of the dead;
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

(Please share God's peace with those around you.)

WE BRING OUR PRAISES, PRAYERS AND GIFTS

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

ANNIKA DURBIN

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

Dan Forrest
RACHEL GILMORE

(Bring gifts for the Tiny Pantry forward.)

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music from the heart.

* OFFERING AND OFFERTORY: *We Three Kings*

arr. Valerie W. Stephenson
YOUTH HANDBELL ENSEMBLE

* DIACONAL PRAYER

AMY TREIER

* HYMN: *Saw You Never in the Twilight*

HYMN 228

WE HEAR GOD SPEAK

(Please remain standing for the reading of God's Word.)

READER: PRISCILLA HEIDEBRECHT

* OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE: *Isaiah 60:1-5*

¹ "Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.
² See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the LORD rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.

³ Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
⁴ “Lift up your eyes and look about you:
All assemble and come to you;
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters are carried on the hip.
⁵ Then you will look and be radiant,
your heart will throb and swell with joy;
the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.

* NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE: *Matthew 2:1-12*

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ ““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.””

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. NIV

* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

MEDITATION: *Our Gifts in Light of God’s Gifts*

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION (*Intinction*)

WE ARE DISMISSED TO LOVE AND SERVE

* CLOSING HYMN: *Amazing Grace*

HYMN 460

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now I'm found, was blind but now I see.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

* BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

TODAY

Thanks to our musicians: Mary Hopper, Rachel Gilmore, Youth Handbell Ensemble

If you would like someone to pray with you after the service, elder Annie Rose will be available near the platform.

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Food Pantry open

Youth Group (White Elephant party)

Dinner provided.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Women's Bible Study** (*childcare*)

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. **Food Pantry open**

Wednesday 9:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Mothering Together** (*childcare*)

Another Banner Year!

Praise the Lord for another year of abundant giving by the Immanuel family. As of last Sunday's offering at the close of 2023, we had received \$907,232 against the operating budget of \$872,100. With expenses below budget, that means we can build up reserves to help make up for the cost of the parking lot (\$122,000) and anticipate future ministry and capital needs. Watch for more details in the annual report, including equally impressive giving to the Deacons Fund, Food Pantry, Missions Christmas, and other ministry areas and projects outside the operating budget.

Prayers during Communion

Prayer to begin a new life in Christ

Dear God, I recognize Jesus came to earth to die on the cross for the sins of your people. I want to recognize now that he came to earth to die for *my* sins. I confess that I am a sinner in need of your grace and the saving blood of Christ. Please forgive me of my sins through the perfect sacrifice of your Son who died in my place. Jesus, come into my heart and change me from the inside out. Help me to truly repent from my previous way of living without you, and help me to surrender to your rule over my life as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for your Spirit that reveals to me the new life that I have in Christ and empowers me to walk in obedience to your truth and will for me. Amen.

Prayer for those struggling with sin

Merciful God, I am thankful that as your child I am not defined by my sin. Help me to walk in obedience to you in all areas of my life. Forgive me for the particular area(s) where I still succumb to temptation and disobey you. Help me to remember that in every area where I am tempted, your word promises that you will provide a way out of those temptations. Fill me with your Spirit, which working in me can do what I cannot do on my own. Help me to walk in obedience to your commands and also delight in them and your guiding words of truth. Please give me the courage to reach out to others in the body of Christ for strength and support when I am especially vulnerable. Amen.

Prayer for those wrestling with doubts and fears

Gracious God, even as your child I wrestle with the fact that your will for me is perfect and that you will supply all of my needs. Help me to set my mind on the truths of your word, and guard my heart when the enemy clouds my mind and heart with fear and doubt. Help me to rest in the peace and security of being your child, and by your Spirit testify with my spirit that I am yours when feelings tell me otherwise. Remind me of your love and delight in me as your child. Amen.

Prayer for those seeking freedom from their past

Almighty God, you have the power to set us free from the sins and entanglements of our past. Release me from the shackles of my past that I carry that you have released me from. Forgive me for holding my past against me in the ways that you do not, and enable me to grasp what it is for you to see me in the perfect righteousness of your Son, both now and forever. May your Spirit, the Spirit of liberty, liberate me from any thought or feeling that belies the fact that I am completely forgiven, or free to live the new life in Christ I have as your new creation. Amen.

ADULT ED CLASSES January 7 - 28

Neighborhood Friends (*Jeff Lancaster*) Informal but sustained relationships are important in our increasingly secular world. Movement toward Christian belief will have to be personal, organic. Friends share their hearts with each other and do what's best for each other. Evangelism can emerge naturally if you don't let pride, fears, or pessimism cut it off and make you hide your faith and heart. The gospel that makes us completely accepted in Christ frees us from fear that keeps us from being vulnerable and that makes us treat friends in a dehumanizing way as "evangelistic projects." Because of the gospel, we can help our friends find faith in the most credible, natural, and fruitful way (Acts 2:47). (Ministry House)

Jeffrey and Cathy Lancaster are serving in Chicago, planting an EPC congregation.

Spiritual Formation as If the Church Matters (*Jim Wilhoit*) The church exists to carry out Christ's mission in the world and to accomplish this spiritual formation must be a central task of the church. The charge to the church, given by Jesus himself, is to make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey his commands (Matt. 28:19-20). The witness, worship, teaching, and compassion that the church is to practice all require that Christians be spiritually formed. This class briefly overviews the themes in my book, *Spiritual Formation as If the Church Mattered* (Baker, 2022), which addresses what the church can do to promote spiritual formation. (Sanctuary)

Jim and Carol Wilhoit have attended Immanuel since 2008. Jim taught spiritual formation at Wheaton College for thirty-eight years and is ordained as a teaching elder in the EPC.

ELDERS

Katherine Anderson (Clerk of Session), Dan Balzer, Bill France, Sarah Holman,
Ron Netzel, Sheroll Ritchie, Leon Sinclair, Steve Westfall, Ken Wolgemuth

DEACONS

Phebe Balzer, Tim Curley, Seth Ehorn, Debby France, Ron Haydon, Dee Netzel,
Tom Nguyen, Katie Pickard, Amy Treier, Becky Williams

STAFF

George A. Garrison: Senior Pastor, Annette LaPlaca, Minister of Congregational Life;
Mary Hopper, Minister of Music: Annika Durbin, Children's Minister;
Anna and Scott Scheidt, Ministers to Youth;
Barbara Lawrence, Church Secretary; Frank Lawrence, Church Sexton

STEPHEN MINISTRY LEADERS

Bev Burch, Leon Sinclair, Angela Wisdom, Annette LaPlaca