

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
5955 South Elm Avenue
Fresno, California 93706

Ministry Staff

Pastor: Rev. Taylor Stempniak
Youth Director: Jacob Wood
Office Secretary/Chimes Editor: Victoria Salwasser
Organist: Laurel Jacobsen
Sound & Technology: Christian Jensen & Jacob Wood

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Vice President: Marcia Hollenbeck
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Financial Secretary: Pat Griffin
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**Happy New Year to
Everyone!**

Return Service Requested



The Immanuel Chimes
January EDITION
2021

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
A Mission of the North American Lutheran Church
5955 South Elm Avenue
Fresno (Easton), California 93706

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Email/Youth Minister: jaywood66@yahoo.com

WORSHIP SCHEDULE SUNDAYS

9:00AM Sunday School for all ages via Zoom
10:00AM Online Worship
11:30AM Outdoor Service of the Word & Communion

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

6:30-8:00PM 6TH -12TH GRADES Refuge Via Zoom

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER SCHEDULE

7:00PM Congregational Prayer Gathering via Zoom on
Second Thursday of each Month

**Annual
Congregational
Meeting
Via Zoom
January 31, 2021 at
9:00AM**

Pastor's Page

Our Daily Rituals—Daily Bread

Breakfast food is my favorite food, but breakfast time is my least favorite time. And so, at least once a week, Luke and I sit down for a dinner of waffles and scrambled eggs, or linguica sandwiches with ooey-goey cheese grits as a side, or buttery biscuits and sausage gravy—so I can enjoy the warmth and comfort of breakfast, even while the moon is already hung high in the sky. The problem with having breakfast food early in the morning is that my favorite breakfast foods takes time. It takes time to get biscuits to rise and to get all the flavors incorporated into gravy just right. For goodness sake, it takes thirty minutes to get good stone ground grits to bloom properly, and while the results are worth it, I don't usually have thirty minutes to spare in the morning. Not when I have to brush my teeth and feed the dogs and prepare for work and try and fail to battle my cowlicks to stay down for once. I'm often running out the door so flustered that I don't even take the time to grab a granola bar or bag of mini muffins or even a thing of buttered toast.

I have been starting my days hungry.

But it hasn't always been like this. Before seminary, breakfast time was an integral part of my daily routine. During weekdays, my breakfast was normally granola bars or Little Bite muffins or even ice cream if my brother wasn't awake yet to call out my "garbage diet." During weekends, time moved slower and my mom or dad normally woke us up with a feast, heavy and delicious, full of eggs and deer sausage and fresh baked biscuits and grits. Even during college, when I was left to fend for myself, I still ate breakfast—granted it was normally leftovers ranging from sushi from the night before or pizza or fried rice or—once again—ice cream—but it was breakfast.

But then seminary happened, and I wasn't just fending for myself. I was fending for myself in the cold, dark winters of Pittsburgh, where it was perpetually gray and there was no sunshine waking me up in the mornings. It was hard to get out of bed, knowing that the outside world would be cold and damp and disappointing. As the result of many late nights doing Greek exegesis and writing theological papers, I became a chronically late sleeper, and I only enjoyed breakfast

In Celebration Of Our Members

Birthdays

1-Jaime Atondo
6-Joe Wozniczka
7-Andrea Bell
9- Joan Wynn
10-Darel Mehrten
13-Marie Salwasser
15-Nick Caglia
17-Tim Pilegard
18-Peter Gutierrez
19-Jon Marthedal
24-Carol Bennetts
-Jacob Caglia
27-Matt Tigchelaar
Marcus Orum
28-Kaylee Bennetts

January Church

Family



Baptismal Birthdays

1-Danel Dickey
-Nick Caglia
-Scott Hollenbeck
- Carl Jensen
-Glenn Nielsen
-Art Olesen
-Joseph Perez
-Jennifer Perez
-Phil Tews
-Cindy Slaton
5-Andrew Nielsen
12-Laura Nielsen
13-Brad Gardner
15-Emmerson Gardner
19-Deanna Dunbar
20-Mike Moser
24-Kaitlyn Cogan

Wedding Anniversaries

5-Adam & Barbara Shamon (8)
15-Bill & Janet Messenlehner (49)
15-Bryan & Becky Gant (16)
20-Art & Marian Olesen (76)
23- Kenneth & Debbie Goff (33)
24-Richard & Jennifer Cisneros (23)

New Addresses for 2021

Lois Rasmussen, Rm # 23
California Armenian Home
6708 E. Kings Canyon Road
Fresno, CA 93727

Gail Hansen, Rm 137
Westmont of Fresno
7442 N. Millbrook Ave.
Fresno, CA 93720

Florence Johnston, Rm # 218
Paintbrush
4356 W. Ashlan
Fresno, CA 93722

Prayer Focus for the Week

Week of 1-3-2021

Focus on a new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”

Week of 1-10-2021

Focus on reading through the Bible in a year.

Psalms 119:105 NIV.

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”

Week of 1-17-2021

Focus on the awesomeness of our God!

Exodus 15:11 NIV.

“Who among the gods is like you, LORD? Who is like you - majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?”

Week of 1-24-2021

Focus on finding peace.

Romans 15:13 NIV.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Week of 1-31-2021

Focus on our spiritual fellowship.

2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

Congregational Meeting

January 31, 2021 on Zoom at 9:00 AM

Annual Reports will be mailed out to the members of the congregation this year. If you are not a member and do not have the internet but would like a copy mailed to you please call Victoria at 237-7909 and request a copy.

once a week—on Wednesdays—when the cafeteria offered us warm scones and granola yogurt and the occasional hard-boiled egg. It was there that I began the unfortunate and unhealthy habit of beginning my days empty, and it is here, in sunny, sometimes foggy, California that I intend to stop this habit. My New Year’s resolution in 2021 is to start each morning celebrating the daily bread that the Lord has given me.

This habit I’ve developed goes deeper than dietary neglect. It’s a symptom of spiritual neglect. I got so caught up in the hustle and bustle of daily life, I stretched my days so thin, I became so busy that I was failing to take a moment to just be still and give thanks that the Lord was caring for me. Every morning, I set a tone of self-importance and self-sabotage because I simply “didn’t have time” to be filled with good things and rejoice in what the Lord provided. Breakfast isn’t the important part of this New Year’s resolution. The important part is gratitude and thanksgiving. This is part of the liturgy and routine of my daily life that I’ve neglected to be intentional about over the past few years, and I’ve reaped the results through a growling belly and a scattered mind. Don’t get me wrong. We’re made to endure the chaos and speed of an early morning rush, but we aren’t made to be ruled by it. My breakfasts this year will probably still include granola bars, but I’ll give thanks to God for each oat stuck in my molars because He has provided for my daily bread. My breakfast this year will probably include homemade biscuits and grits, and I’ll give thanks to God for slower mornings and time to rest. My breakfast this year will most definitely include the occasional bowl of ice cream, and I’ll rejoice that the Lord gives us space for indulgence and celebration in our day-to-day life. It’s so important for us take a moment early in the morning and rejoice that the Lord has given us good things, during slow mornings and fast mornings, because it strengthens us with the knowledge that if the Lord provides for us in our first waking moments, surely He will provide for us throughout the rest of our daily life as well. This is a liturgy of thanksgiving, and a liturgy of trust, acknowledging that God is there to fill us with good things. It’s an opportunity to give thanks that He has provided for our daily bread, both spiritual and nutritional, and that is something to rejoice in not only when we can find time, but every morning where God makes time for us.

Blessings to you and your new year,
Pastor Taylor

Journey

I'm feeling optimistic!

2021 is going to be a better year, I just feel it in my bones. Trust me, I'm starting to feel everything in my bones. The further 2020 is in our rear view mirror the better it's going to be. I think it's safe to say 2020 hasn't been a very pleasant year. I'm not sad to see it go. I'm sure 2020 didn't set out to be a bad year. It just fell in with the wrong crowd.

A fire season like none other. The Creek fire burned for half the year. Air quality was trash. It seemed the Creek fire had a family reunion, there was family from everywhere. I have a friend who has 5 siblings, all of whom are mountain people. They all five lost their homes and her home was threatened. Rich and Allyson lost a home. Our Syd and Andrea lost a home in the Santa Cruz mountains. Debbie Goff's relatives lost a home in Oregon.

This political season was just disgusting. Every political ad was nothing but attacks on their opponents.

We lost some really good people this year. Bud, Tom, Ron, Franklin, Phyllis, Margie, Lois Idhe, Mel, Jerry and our sweet Damon. People we wish were still with us.

Of course, the virus. Covid-19! How could such a tiny little microorganism change the lives of everyone on the planet? We certainly learned a lot about ourselves and those around us. Is the virus real or not real? Are we maskers or non-maskers? Do we shut down or not shut down? The next question being, are we vaccinators or non-vaccinators?

I know each of you has an opinion and so do I. But that's not why I write. I write this because I believe I'm called to find some positives to bring to the table. Here are some of those.

This year has taught us to think way outside of our boxes. How about a fresh out of seminary, female pastor from the east coast? Yeah! That's one box opened, I think you'll agree, that has brought many, many, blessings. And Luke is alright too. We've nearly perfected our on-line service thanks to Pastor, Jacob and Christian. Remember when we thought recording the sermon on cassette tape and distributing it around was high tech? We've done family camp style worship outside for weeks at a time. We do Sunday school on-line via email. I would encourage you to join in or start one of your own with friends. We learned

Prayers of the Church

For Christ's Church: *Eternal God, we thank You for Your Church through which the gospel of Jesus Christ has been manifest in every age.*

Members and their families serving in the military: Erica Botello, Joey Brewer, Henry Clark, Michael Hansen, Caleb Hathaway, Scott Linger, Matt Ward, & Matthew Tigchelaar.

Those unable to travel about: Olga Hansen, Marilyn Iversen, Art & Marian Olesen, Phyllis Petersen, & Howard Nielsen.

Those in need of healing: Marilyn Bell, Sandy Britter, Luanne Byrd, Eli Cisneros, Gaye Cissel, Geoff Cooper, Pastor Gary Gould, Dennis Haugh, Judy Hooper, Florence Johnston, Sam Navaro, Gil Nagel, Glenn & Marilyn Nielsen, Christie Pettitt, Chuck Phillips, Sr., Virginia Pilegard, Aslak Syse, Timm Trickett, Joe Wozniczka & Joni Zingarelli.

Prayer Chain Updates

Pastor Gary Gould is home from rehab and doing well. He is walking and on the mend. He is excited to have a wonderful Christmas home with his family.

Marilyn Bell is home and undergoing in-home physical therapy and trying to learn how to walk again on her own. Continue to pray for Ed and Marilyn Bell as they tackle the new path God has set before them.

Prayers for praise and thanks, the **Perez Family** has beat COVID. Joseph, Sr. and his dad, are back to work and the kids and Jennifer are feeling much better. Please pray that young Joseph regains his taste and smell. That symptom is hanging on for him.

Congregational Prayer Gatherings

Please join the Deacons of Immanuel as we invite you to join us via Zoom for our monthly prayer time on the **second Thursday of each month, January 17th at 7:00 pm.** It is a new approach for all of us. You won't have to pray out loud if you don't want too. By having you with us, you will add to our sense of community. Watch your email from the church for a link to log on. I hope to see you sign on and pray with us. Love, John Jensen

Smorgasbord Revival Proposal

As you all know, we stopped hosting Smorgasbord a couple of years ago. Have any of you given thought to starting it back under a reduced or different format? Could it work in a drive-thru take-out only format with a reduced menu? Just asking and thinking of the success of the pulled-pork sandwich event. Of course, there are issues such as meatballs and gravy, but I believe these could be overcome.

Proposed Take-out Only Menu

Slice of Ham

Danish Sausage

Frikadeller (Meatballs) and gravy

Red Cabbage

Rod Grod (Danish pudding)



All but the pudding would require reheating instructions.

We could make preliminary contacts to gauge interest ahead of time before proceeding.

Please give this some consideration before responding. You can call, text or email me with positive and negatives.

John Reynolds

559-351-0938 or sreynolds10@verizon.net

a new definition of an old word - Zoom. So, 2020 wasn't without its merits.

Now 2021 is going to be better! It'll be better because we'll choose to make it better. We can be a little more understanding. We can be a little kinder. We can slow down and look for ways to connect with those around us. Make a phone call, a text, or an email. Or go real old school and write a letter. Send a greeting card. Send some flowers. Safely drop off some cookies or a meal. Smile once in a while even if you're only smiling to yourself. All of these things become easier when you start your day with devotions and prayer. Jump in and read through the Bible in a year. There are lots of plans on line. Join a study group or start one with your friends. Again, there are endless resources on-line. The Pastor is zooming a Sunday school class, oddly enough on Sunday mornings. Catch the service on-line. Weather permitting, come to the Grace Hall amphitheater for an in-person service with communion. Don't wait for things to come to you. Get up, step out and look for ways to get closer to your God. You and I know that the things that matter the most come from the hand of the Man who stilled the water!

Written in 1970 by Gene Maclellan with probably the most remembered version by Anne Murray:

Put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the waters,
Put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea:
Take a look at yourself and you can look at others differently.
By putting your hand in the hand of the man from Galilee....

Reach out y'all.
Love, John.

Service of the Word Outdoors

A Sunday, mid-day socially-distanced service is offered outdoors at the church at 11:30 am for those that wish to have in-person worship and fellowship. This is not be the same service that is broadcasted online. We are using the Service of the Word— which is a bit briefer than the usual Sunday liturgy, so you can get to lunch in a timely manner. There are different readings and meditations offered. Gathering at the later time allows us to be in slightly warmer temperatures, while still getting everyone out to lunch before anyone gets too hangry or too cold. Because we do govern ourselves according to pandemic precautions, please wear a mask and bring your own chair.

Hope to see you there,
Pastor Taylor

News Notes

Anniversary blessings to ART & MARIAN OLESEN on their 76th anniversary January 20th. WOW!! 76 YEARS!! This is worth printing every year. Art and Marian met at the El Taberon Ball Room in San Francisco while Art was in the service. Art was a wonderful singer and dancer. Marian owned Marian's Beauty Salon in San Rafael. They married in 1945 after a year and half courtship. The war ended and he was discharged after 5 years of service. Art worked for North Bay Electric and Marian continued working in her salon for five years. They had their first daughter in San Rafael and when Marian was expecting their second child, they sold their house in San Rafael and moved to Easton in 1950. Art bought out the plumbing and electrical part of his father's business and moved onto a half acre plot on the family farm where they still live today. At the ages of 101 and 102, life this side of the cross is not easy, but they are blessed to be together. **CONTRATULATIONS ART & MARIAN!**

MATT AND HANNAH LINDSEY, Art and Marian's grandson and his wife welcomed their first baby on November 15th and named him JACK ARTHUR after his great-grandfather, Art Olesen. The family is doing well. Welcome baby Jack!

Annual Reports for 2020

Due on January 11, 2021

The 2020 Annual Report will be mailed to the members of the congregation and posted on our website

The following committees are asked to turn in a brief recap (this year, many of the reports will be brief) of the year's activities to share with our members in our annual report. Please submit your report to the church office or email to: immanueleaston@sbcglobal.net

Breaking Grounds Café	Grace in Action-All Classes
Blood Drive-Bleed & Feed	Men's Bible Study
Call Committee	Nominating Committee
Care Bears	Quilters
Caruthers Fair/Pull Pork Sandwich	Treasurer
Congregational President	Trustees
Deacons	Women's Ministry President
Fellowship Luncheon Report	Women's Ministry Treasurer
Financial Secretary	Youth Minister

Women's Ministry

January is the time of year when our Women's Ministry plans a spectacular Epiphany Event. I'm sorry we have not planned anything for this year. I hope to be rejuvenated in January and get together with the other board members to plan something wonderful for the women of Immanuel. Does anyone have any ideas? Would there be anyone interested in working with the women's board to plan zoom gatherings or Bible studies? I'm seeking help and ideas. Please call me if you would at 559-285-5181. What would interest you? I miss visiting with my friends and our gatherings. I pray we can get together again soon, but until then, please give me a call with thoughts or ideas or just to chat and tell me about your days and weeks and months since we have last been together.

Epiphany will be come and we will celebrate, but this year, not in person, together. Let us all rejoice in our Savior's birth and bake a few Kings Cakes this season. Try google for some recipes, maybe even a gluten free Kings Cake is appropriate for this year. My sisters in Christ, Epiphany is a time to celebrate and let's not forget, Lent is coming. Soup Suppers and Lenten Devotions are on our horizon.

I miss you all, Victoria



Sympathy Love & Prayers for the families

Margie Louise Christensen, Betty Jensen's sister and a cousin to Doris Sparks, passed away in her home on November 27, 2020 surrounded by her loving family. Private services were held for immediate family on December 10th with burial following at Washington Colony Cemetery in Easton.

Andree Simone Marcellis Kennedy, 80, Horton, Kansas, passed away on Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2020 at the Hiawatha Community Hospital. She was born on Oct. 9, 1940 in Saint-Mhiel, France. Andree worked as a correction officer for the department of corrections in Lansing, Kansas for over 31 years before retiring. She loved quilting, knitting, was an avid Kansas University fan and enjoyed spending time with her children and grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Francis Kennedy, Sr. and her step-son, Francis Kennedy, Jr. Andree joined Immanuel in 2010 while she was living with Donna and Francis in Sanger. She later moved back to Kansas to be closer to her other children, where she lived for the past 9 years. She truly missed living in Sanger, attending church at Immanuel, and spending time with her grandchildren, especially attending all of their sporting events.

Jenny Lee Hodges Farsakian passed away on December 14th after a year long battle with cancer. She leaves behind a loving husband, two little girls and so many friends and family that loved her. Her cousin, Allison Terrones, sent her to us for prayers in November 2019, we have prayed for her battle with cancer. She is now with her Savoir and pain free. Thank you all from the Orum, Hodges and Farsakian families for your prayers.

Youth Director

Hello Immanuel,

We are heading to 2021 after having a long, challenging but still fruitful year. We have some announcements leading into the new year.

- Refuge will resume on January 13th, a bit of a longer break, but we want to allow students to readjust to whatever their school plans may be before we reintroduce Refuge into their schedules.

- Refuge will continue to meet on Zoom for the time being. We will continue to watch cases, vaccinations, etc. as we make our decisions moving forward.

- Thank you all once again for those that donated towards the care packages. The students were very thankful.

Please pray for our students that we do not get to see on Zoom. We miss them all dearly.

Jacob Wood, Youth Director at Immanuel



After more than two months of being COVID-19 free, we had a few people (staff and residents) who tested positive and Bethel Lutheran Home in Selma went into quarantine once again. Protocols were strictly observed and testing has been done weekly. After two weeks of quarantine, we are happy to report no current cases of COVID-19, which means we are no longer in quarantine and we pray it stays that way for the rest of 2020.

The wonderful staff at Bethel is doing everything possible to make sure this Christmas will be spiritually meaningful and a true celebration of our Savior's birth for our residents, in spite of restrictions. Thanks to the generosity of many churches, each resident has their own decorated Christmas tree, a nice warm blanket will be delivered by Santa, and we look forward to our first outdoor Tree Lighting Ceremony. Many Christmas lights have been donated, so the home will be lit up this year. From Bethel Lutheran Home to you, we wish you a Blessed Christmas and we look forward to a

Happy New Year.

Shikha Patteson, Administrator

Neighborhood Market Needs Help

The Easton Food Distribution needs volunteers! We have been blessed by volunteers sent by the Food Bank. Last month, three nurses from Valley Children's came on their day off to help us. You can sign up to volunteer at their website or just show up. What we really need are folks with strong backs and muscles. Ask your friends and neighbors if they are willing and available on January 4th from 12:00-3:00PM to help distribute food at a drive through distribution at Easton Presbyterian Church. It is a blessing to serve. Please wear a mask and close toed shoes and bring your own water bottle.

Contribution Envelopes for 2021

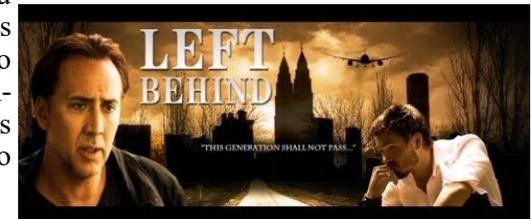
Contribution envelopes are in this year. These envelopes help our financial secretary keep track of your donations and prepare a tax deduction form that you may use when reporting your taxes to the IRS. **If you would like your contributions credited for 2020**, please have them to the **church office by Sunday, December 27th**. The 2021 envelopes will be available to pick up in the church entryway in front of the closet doors by December 27th. If you would like your envelopes delivered or mailed, please call the church office. Thank you.

Altar Flower Sign Ups for 2021

The new sign-up sheet is hanging up on the bulletin board in the church entryway. If you would like to sign up for a special day to place flowers on the altar for Sunday Worship, please call the church office or sign up on the sign up sheet.

Immanuel's Library Give Away!

If anyone is interested, the library has received a very generous donation of the entire **Left Behind** series, which is great reading, but there is no shelf room for the 13 volumes. If you are intrigued by the end times (maybe one of you ladies who studied "Revelation" in the morning Bible study?), let me know as I am forced by lack of space to give the series away.



Call (834-2302) or talk to Carol Bennetts today; delivery is free! I highly recommend the series and would love to see it go to a good home since we can't keep it.

Serving for Him, read on good and faithful servants,
Carol Bennetts

Russ Dunbar Memorial Blood Drive

Immanuel started hosting Blood Drives in Easton back in 2004 when our member, Russ Dunbar, was battling a blood disease that required regular transfusions. After Russ passed, the Blood Center continued to come as a service to our community in memory of Russ. Since we began in 2004, we have collected 1,609 units of much needed blood. The first year was the highest at 149 pints. Through these 17 years, we have averaged almost 95 pints each year. Guess what folks? 2020 wasn't even the lowest. In 2013, we collected only 56 pints of blood. In 2020, we collected 59 pints of much needed blood. Praise God for faithful donors in our community. The need for blood is essential. It's also very safe to do even in a blood mobile. Everyone wears a mask, the trucks are well ventilated and sanitized, and the chairs used are safely spaced. If you would feel more comfortable donating in at the blood center, simply choose a center closest to you and when you donate, give them Immanuel's Russ Dunbar Memorial Blood Drive Code **i114**. This code will count your unit to our drive total. Our 2021 drive line-up is listed below with the link to sign up online. You may sign up for the full year and mark your calendars for each drive.

- 1/10/21 <https://signup.com/go/Rhjopxg>
- 3/14/21 <https://signup.com/go/qutqnFa>
- 5/16/21 <https://signup.com/go/xBfFwOU>
- 7/18/21 <https://signup.com/go/vOYSOuN>
- 9/19/21 <https://signup.com/go/EKoiaJp>
- 11/21/21 <https://signup.com/go/wabVKef>

This ministry is crucial everyday and every year. Each unit you donate helps three people in their time of need. Please consider this ministry if you are healthy and able to donate. Thank you to our community for supporting this life saving ministry for 17 years.

News Notes



Pastor Taylor's first Baptism at Immanuel. (*God is with us*)



Here we go!

Pandemic, Shmamdemic, there is baptizing to be done! Cold and crazy, traffic and fog, we welcomed Aubrey Ann Nielsen into Christ's family with an outdoor, socially distanced baptism! She was baptized by Pastor Taylor at our Service of the Word on Sunday, December 20th. With her family watching and praising God, she was baptized as a child of God through the faith of her parents, Karl and Allyson Nielsen, and her Godparents, Evan and Amber Marthedal.



Rejoice! Aubrey is Baptized!