

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
5955 South Elm Avenue
Fresno, California 93706

Ministry Staff

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Vice President: Kristi Hollenbeck

Council Secretary: Allyson Kahn

Financial Secretary: Sharon Reynolds

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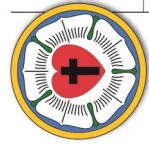
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John Jensen & Allyson Nielsen

Women's Ministry President:

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NAALC

North American Lutheran Church

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This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not ye gleam in glory, but all is being purified."

— Martin Luther

Return Service Requested



The Immanuel Chimes DECEMBER 2023

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN
CHURCH

A Mission of the North American Lutheran Church

5955 South Elm Avenue

Fresno (Easton), California 93706

Church Telephone (559) 237-7909

Email: office@immanueleaston.com

Email/Pastor: ptmarieg6@gmail.com

WORSHIP SCHEDULE SUNDAYS

9:30 AM Inter Generational Sunday School

10:30AM Worship & Communion

December Remembers:

Congregational Field Trip to Hillcrest Farm

After Church December 3rd

Christmas Craft Day in Grace Hall

9:30AM December 10th

Christmas Eve Candle Light Services

10:30AM & 9:00 PM on December 24th

**Fellowship Luncheon
in Social Hall**

Pastor's Page

One of my brothers liked to hunt for his Christmas gifts every year. He'd look for them in every nook and cranny of the house. He searched in the attic and under the beds and in the dusty corners of our home. It was an annual ritual I never paid much attention to, until the year he found them. My dad's closet had an upper shelf and for years the gifts had been safely tucked away out of sight and reach of prying eyes, but through sheer will that year, they'd been discovered.

My brother immediately regretted it.

This wasn't the same as shaking wrapped gifts under the tree and trying to guess what their colorful paper hid. It wasn't the same as hunting for answers in hidden corners. Here it was: every answer, every gift, every moment of anticipation was gone. Part of the fun had been the hunt and the buildup and now there was nothing to look forward to. He rushed to the end and he got the answers he wanted—sure, but in the process he realized that part of what made the gifts special was the joy of sharing it in community. Part of what made the gifts special was waiting to see the face of the person who had set it aside for you. Finding these things, he had marked down carefully on a Christmas list out of context made them seem less like gifts and more like a pile of things without meaning.

My parents ended up salvaging the whole ordeal somehow. I think they returned some of the gifts and kept others, so he didn't know what he'd get, and Christmas morning still carried this moment of surprise and joy. My brother never tried to find his gifts before Christmas morning again, though he'd still rattle whatever presents were wrapped up underneath the tree.

I think about this every year as December creeps closer. Somewhere along the way, the season of Advent was gobbled up by Christmas like a child that insists on cracking hard candy between their teeth instead of savoring it on their tongue. Once the Thanksgiving turkey has been carved and the gravy has been soaked up, the eyes of the worship and music committee snap to me and ask "Where is Away in A Manger?" and folks shake my hand a little extra firmly as they walk out of church the first



Prayer Focus for the week

Week of 12-4-2023. Focus on Jesus coming to us. John 1:14 NIV. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Week of 12-11-2023. Focus on Jesus' salvation for us. Acts 4:12 NIV. Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

Week of 12-18-2023. Focus on God's Christmas gift to us. John 3:16 NIV. For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Week of 12-25-2023. Focus on Jesus the savior. John 14:6 NIV. Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Prayers Of Our 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, Canaan Campbell, Joey Brewer, Henry Clark, Ryan Freitas, Michael Hansen, Leah Linger, Connor Mannix, & Matthew Tigchelaar.

Those unable to travel about: Gail Hansen, Paul Pedersen, & Kenneth Selzer, Bonnie Terkelsen.

Those in need of pain relief & healing: Gordon Bennetts, Joy Bratton, Sandy Britter, Ed Bordin, Gaye Cissel, Steve Fletcher, Kristen Gibson, Ed Gomez, Pat Griffin, Josh Hammers, Jim Hansen, Jan Kersgaard, Paul Jones, Donna Kennedy, Marcus Miranda, Gloria Payne, Larry Pickens, Patti Price, Bob Reynolds, Janice Robinson, Rebecca Stempniak, Pastor Taylor Stempniak, & Keitt Wilson.

For those mourning the loss of loved ones: The family of Verna Koslan.

For people dealing with loneliness and depression. For those battling the illness and the health care providers tending to those in need.

In Celebration of Our Members



Birthdays

- 1-Michelle Hollenbeck
- 4-Joseph T. Perle
- 5- Allyson Kahn
- Mikey Pilegard
- 8-Emilee Goff
- 10-Deanna Dunbar
- 11-Joanie Ascencio
- 12-Christian Jensen
- Brittney Gardner
- 15-Brooke Hartwig
- 17-Fred Johnson
- Eve Allred
- 20-Cindy Slaton
- 21-Aaliyah Bell
-Isaac Orozco Jr.
- 24-Ellen Nielsen
- 25-Floyd Harlan
-Donna Ewing
- 28-Mike Nielsen
-Nathan Harding
- 29-Julius Perez
-Stacy Avedisian
-Ed Vike
- 30-Shelbi Clarkson
-Stephanie Hollenbeck
- 31-Daniel Hartwig
-Karen Jensen
-Debby Saethre

Birthdays

- Timmy Pilegard
- Sharon Reynolds
- 2-Bruce McElhoe
- 7-Mark Salwasser
- 11-Aaliyah Bell
- 12-Sarah Pilegard
- Karen Jensen
- Violet Jensen
- 15-Isaac Orozco, Jr.
- 18-Jim Hansen
-Amos Kahn
-Nathan Kahn
- 19-Scott Hollenbeck
- 20-Fred Cogan
-Aubrey Nielsen
- 22-Amy Hansen
-Erica Gardner
- 25-Joan Lindsey
-Gina Cogan
- 31-John Reynolds



Wedding Anniversaries

- 12- Robert & Joanie Ascencio (30)
- 16-Tim & Debbie Pilegard (34)
- 30-Jon & Sandy Marthedal (45)

Sunday in December asking, “Where is Silent Night?” (I notice nobody has asked me why I don’t play Jesus Christ Is Risen Today on Good Friday.) We begin searching for Jesus in the closet by the choir room, in dusty wreaths, and old hymnals. We begin trying to pull soft, tender, mild, sweet baby Jesus out from the top of the pastor’s closet where she’s hidden him away for the season for some reason.

Good.

Maybe that sounds a little sassy, but good. Keep hunting for him. Keep trying to find Jesus. Keep searching for those Christmas Carols. They’ll show up, I promise, but the season of Advent is important. It’s a season of the hunt. I hope that whenever you desire a Christmas Carol, you are prompted to desire the one they are written for. This is a season of people walking in darkness and searching for the light, and for centuries the church set it aside in hopeful anticipation of our Lord’s arrival in the manger and our Lord’s triumphant arrival for his throne. This is a season—just four short weeks—set aside for us to realize how desperately we long for our Lord’s arrival. How badly do we need God to show up in our lives? How badly do we need not only little baby Jesus surrounded by cattle and making Herod tremble in his castle, but King of Kings Jesus sitting on his heavenly throne and surrounded by the saints to be worshiped and glorified? How badly do we need that hope? How dark was life without it? How sweet is life now that we know what awaits us from the babe born in Jerusalem and the liberating Lord of Lords? Trying to understand Christmas without Advent is like trying to understand Easter without Lent.

Somewhere along the way, the story of scripture stopped dictating how we observed this season and the Hallmark channel did. As soon as Walmart realized they could sell us more stuff if Christmas started the day after Halloween, we signed on. Don’t get me wrong. The world is dark and scary and hot cocoa is sweet and I’m going to watch the Christmas Prince and deck the halls as I see fit. That’s good! You



You should feel free to celebrate and prepare alongside your family and friends too, but it is okay for the church to ask us to have a bit of discipline and wait during our worship. The church—the larger church—asks us to press pause. If we listen to the stories of scripture told around this time of year, we listen to God talking to a broken people. We listen to

The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid.

Martin Luther

God coming to people who are dealing with grief, war, famine, and sin. They have been through it and they feel separated from God. They aren't sure where their hope will be found, but the prophet Isaiah assures us that God hasn't abandoned us. The prophet Isaiah assures us that a messiah is coming. John the Baptist stands on the banks of a river and begins crying the same message of hope and repentance: our God is coming and he is a God that cannot be contained or controlled. Mary the Mother of our Lord cries out with joy that yes, she does know. She knows who she carries in her womb and that when she delivers this child unto the world, she will deliver not just a new life into her family, but a new life to each and every one of us. We listen to a people longing and a God reminding them that they cannot rush him.

Advent is a season of surrender and waiting. It reminds us that we cannot control our God's grand entrance any more than Mary could control when it was that her body first began to labor. We can and should hunt for him. We should search for him in the faces of our neighbors and in the words of his holy scriptures and in the lilting tunes of hymns, but he is not a gift we pull out of a closet on our own timeline. He's a king, and he arrives exactly when he intends to. We await a baby, and we await a risen God. We await a God that was born of the virgin Mary, took on flesh and became man for you and for me, and a God who will come again to judge the living and the dead. We await a God whose kingdom will have no end. We await to welcome him with lullabies and adoration. We await, we long, we hunt for Christmas morning.

Wishing you all a blessed Advent Season,
Pastor Taylor

Give yourself the gift of reading!



From Carol Bennetts

Check out a Christmas book from Immanuel's Library during the month of December and treat yourself during this blessed season.

There are lots of choices in both fiction and non-fiction that can help you remember that He is the reason for the season!

LMVFM's primary fundraiser is our annual Christmas Ornament Adoption Appeal. It begins November 1 and runs through January 31, 2024. An ornament is made by a veteran or their family member or their family member will be selected for "adoption", your name or the name of someone you want to honor will be attached. It will then be hung on the LMVFM's Christmas tree, photographed and posted on the LMVFM Facebook page and website where you and or the person you wish to honor can view it. You will have the joy of knowing that your gift gives hope to those you have sacrificed much for the liberty and freedom of this nation.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift today, or give online at www.LMVGM.org. Above all, please keep our ministry and those whom we serve in your prayers.

In His Service,
Chaplain Leslie Haines (MAJ) Ret., STS

P.S.: Gifts of any amount are welcomed. This is a great way to honor or memorialize the veterans among your family or friends. You can even give a meaningful gift in the name of a friend, loved one, or co-worker who already has everything! Thank you for your generous gift, and helping us to serve, with Christ's love, those whom have served.

Therapy Dogs, members of the 'Paws & Effect' program who work within the LMVFM



Lutheran Military Veteran and Family Ministries



“And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be

a sign for you: you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:10-12

The events unfolding throughout our wonderful country, and the world are unsettling. Many of us feel anxious or even fearful as we enter this Christmas season—a season which is intended to offer hope and peace. It is interesting to note that some variation of the phrase “do not be afraid” appears in the Bible approximately 365 times. Our Lord knows our hearts and minds and understands our tendency to fear the unknown. He reminds us, patiently and often, that He is in control.

Today our military veterans, contractors and their families need to hear this Good News now more than ever, especially as we reflect on the fact that the number of veteran suicides continues to increase year after year. Sadly, the fact that the reporting process of veteran suicides is flawed suggests that the numbers are actually worse. Therefore, the mission of this ministry is critical.

At LMVFM, we serve with Christ’s love, those who have paid a heavy spiritual and emotional price.

- LMVFM offers free, Christ-centered counseling for individuals and families affected by military service-related post-traumatic stress.
- LMVFM team members travel around the country, training pastors and other professionals and lay caregivers to recognize and respond to the moral and spiritual wounds of war within their congregations and families.
- LMVFM’s therapy dogs, members of the ‘Paws & Effect’ program, work with those we counsel, and assist our training efforts.

As a matter of conscience LMVFM does not take government funds. Our ability to provide counseling and services free to veterans, military contractor, or family member is made possible through the generous gifts from supporters like you.

Christmas Offering

Our Christmas offering this year will be going to support the ministry at Iglesia Lutreana Santa Cruz in Santa Maria, California. This congregation was started in 2002 as a Hispanic outreach ministry by Pastor Patricia Muran, and today Pastor Esteban Salazar and his wife, Angie, are serving over five hundred parishioners. Their congregation is predominately made up of Mixteco migrant farmers, who are consistently bringing their entire families to worship on Sunday morning and throughout the week to participate in confirmation classes. This ministry has thrived through the work of the Holy Spirit and the faithful service of pastors like Pastor Patricia and Pastor Esteban and their families, and their willingness to think creatively and engage with the needs and unique challenges of the community around them.

Due to the nature of migrant farming, the parishioners worshipping in this church are not always able to contribute financially. Pastor Esteban encourages the congregation to consider bringing bags of rice, beans, and maseca (corn flour) to share with their neighbors rather than encouraging them to give money they need for rent, and the church collects this food along with hygiene supplies and clothes to redistribute every week to the larger community. They seek to live generously and faithfully in what they’ve been given.

Of course, this doesn’t change the reality that it costs money to run a church. For over twenty years, Iglesia Lutreana, has shared a building with their sister church Bethel Lutheran, Santa Maria, and relied on the support of congregations throughout California to meet the needs of their congregation and pastor. Due to the impact of the severe weather over the past year on the congregants, the need has never been greater in the congregation, and as the church council and as the NALC, we want to make sure this congregation is able to continue to do the important work of the Great Commission—proclaiming the good news of the Gospel and baptizing all those who gather around the lifesaving word of the Lord in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

If you would like to know more about this church please give me a call.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Taylor



Journey

So as I come to the end of another year, I am compelled to ponder some of the hardest questions.

Why am I still here? What does God still have left for me to do? What does he see that is obscured from my sight? Was I put here just to do battle with the High Speed Rail and the county of Fresno's Planning Department? I certainly hope not. But then, was I a good representative of God as I dealt with those folks? I want to believe I conducted myself in a manner that caused them to think, there's something different about him. I think I did more than I didn't. Did I give the board members of Bethel Home a positive glimpse of the primary church group that supports them. Again, I believe I promoted the best of decisions for the home. Did I do the best for good old Immanuel Lutheran? I tried to greet as many as I could both old timers and first timers. I spoke up at council meetings and Sunday School when I felt led to. I tried my best to be objective.

I've facilitated the Online Prayer Community for a few years now. I tried to encourage that community to be diligent in the prayers that have come before us. See me if you wish to be included. 2nd Sunday Community prayers has always been important to me. You can join us anytime there, as well. I've been a deacon for as long as you would let me. Deacon is even a part of my email address. I've written close to 100 Journey articles, some were pretty good, if I do say so myself. I have to admit to it being a bit self serving, as I have guided myself along the grieving process. I think I have a good understanding of what works best for me. I believe I've caused you to think about your own journeys. The journey, small 'j', I know won't end until I stand on that distant shore with the other saints. And yet, I by no means have it figured out. Every time one of the saints departs us I plunge back into that journey again. My prayer is that you have felt a sense of fellowship with us who also grieve and that you don't think you have to go it alone.

But there is still more to do, I guess, I am still here. And if God can use me, wretched sinner that I am, I'll carry on as he gives me strength. I also encourage you to carry on. To continue to give in the way God leads you. You all have unique talents and gifts. Don't think for one moment that you are talentless, you are not. It's your talent, not only here at Immanuel but also anywhere that you find yourself, school,

Women's Ministry Invites the Congregation For a Family Fun Event

Christmas Trees 2023

After church on December 3rd, we are caravanning to Hillcrest Christmas Tree Farm located in Reedley, 6943 S. Reed Ave. Reedley CA 93654. There will be various food trucks for us to eat at for lunch. Many of those take only cash, so plan accordingly. Join us for a field trip full of fellowship and fun!

HILLCREST IS OPEN FOR CHRISTMAS

TREE SALES FROM 10:00AM-5:00PM

**TRAIN RIDES ARE \$5 EACH FOR
AGES 2 AND UP,**

**SANTA WILL BE THERE AS
WELL AS FOOD VENDORS**

This year they have Monterey Pines that you can cut yourself. They have saws or you may bring your own. All cut your own trees are \$75 each no matter what size, so get the biggest one you can find!

They also have Noble, Douglas and Fraser Firs that will not grow here, (too hot!) shipped in from snow country that range from \$45-\$310 depending on species and size. Their tallest Firs are 10/11' but not too many available.



What's New in Easton!

Businesses are Booming in Easton!!! Here is a preview to a few.

The owners of Easton Auto Parts retired and sold their building to Steven Cardoza and he rents the building to Martha and Maria. This building is located at 5765 S. Elm (next door/behind Subway). It's now two businesses under one roof. The business on the left is ODARAY BEAUTY SALON. Martha is the hair dresser and takes appointments during the week and offers senior specials on Wednesdays. Walk-Ins are welcome on Saturdays. She is a full service salon including, waxing, haircuts, colors, permanents, and shampoo & sets. Call Martha at 559-515-6528 for your next hair appointment. Maria G. Parra is the owner of PARRA'S MULTISERVICE AGENCY. She is a realtor, tax preparer, notary public and soon will offer fingerprinting services for Live Scan. The building is beautiful inside. It looks a lot different than when it was an auto parts store. Check them out next time you need one of the services they offer.

The next building on the south side is the La Placita Raspondos, it means Shaved Ice in Spanish. This business sits back under a car port area. It's been in business quite a few years now I just thought I should highlight it since it's part of the Elm Ave Strip. Erica owns this business and wow, what a find tucked under the carport. She is open Monday through Friday from 11:00AM-5:00PM and 10:00AM-4:00PM on Saturdays. She sells fresh fruit cups and drinks called Aguas Frescas, she serves 2 different flavors every day and has 20 different flavors that she makes. She bakes cookies and makes tortas daily. She takes orders for tamales on Thursdays for pick up on Fridays. She makes Pork, Corn, and Cheese & Pepper Tamales. She also makes catering trays of rice, beans, Barbacoa and other items. All catering trays must be special ordered. She makes beautiful piñatas and sells the Mexican candy to fill them. It's a lovely store if you like fresh fruit cups, she has them, she keeps busy when the students are in school selling smoothies and lots of fruit. Visit the lovely store soon.

The Indian Furniture Store is in the former Commit to Fit Building. Ravinder Kakker bought the building from Ron Silva 3 years ago. Ravinder and his wife are realtors and moved to Clovis from Florida six years ago. They sell houses and realized that their clients of Indian decent, were not able to find quality furniture that will last for generations. They decided to open a furniture store and sell high quality furniture and draperies imported from India in the large part of the building. Later they hope to open a restaurant in the adjacent area in the building. The furniture is exquisite and very comfortable. They also make and sell outdoor garden boxes and picnic tables. They offer financing as well. Check out the Indian Furniture Store Monday—Saturday in Easton Across from Easton Market.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Welcomes new businesses to Easton!

work, grocery store, park, neighborhood, care facility, where ever and however you can. Don't be discouraged and don't give up. Someone needs your smile and to hear your hello.

Christmas is coming. People are feeling lonely and alone. Reach out, as Jesus reached out to you. You're still here for a reason, as well. I need you. I need your greeting. I need your text message. I need your hugs. I need your smile. I need to hear your God's blessings. I need your kidding. I need your sarcasm. I need to know we are in this together. I need your encouragement.

We can't read each other's minds. We need to be honest and forth coming with each other, let me or someone know if you are suffering. I want to be for you what you are for me, there!

God bless you this Christmas season. May you be filled with the joy only God through Jesus can bring. Give yourselves the gift of giving something of yourself to others. Don't run yourself ragged. Don't spend yourselves into debt. Don't forget to love.

John

P. S. As occasionally happens the above is the second Journey that I wrote this month. The first one came into my mind about a week ago. I read an article about a guy who served his relatively small community in an elected position. Every one loved him and appreciated his service. Then, someone became aware that he was also a member of a different community than they had known before. Not one member of the predominantly Christian community came and told him they loved and accepted him. Instead, they harassed him and bullied him. Not one in that community reached out in love. Isolated and broken he took his own life. That so angers me. I decided to write about how at ease we are to see the speck in some ones eye and overlook the giant sequoia in ours. I've got to tell the article got very dark, very fast. So dark that as I reread it I thought that it had gone outside the lines. I'll save it and rehash it someday.

You and I make a difference in this world. We can either make a Jesus difference or we can choose not too. I love you all. This season let's be on the Jesus side.



Immanuel & FCA Lunches

Friends, it's time to get ready for Immanuel's turn to host the FCA lunches for 2023/24. This is a great opportunity to welcome student/athletes from WUHS onto our church campus for lunch while they listen to a guest speaker. We will be hosting November 29 and December 6 & 13. I would love for you to consider helping with this important Washington Union-Easton ministry even if you can't make it each day. Please let me know which day you are able to help so I can plan enough coverage. I am happy to answer any questions you might have. We typically meet around 10/10:30 to start prepping for lunch at 12:25.

This year we would like to give every student a chocolate chip cookie for dessert. If you are willing and able to donate chocolate chip cookies with NO nuts for this ministry, it would truly help. Please bring the cookies to Immanuel by Tuesday prior or place the cookies in the freezer marked FCA on Sunday mornings, noting the number of cookies on your containers helps us quickly count supplies. This year I am planning for over 300 guests each week since this is the number other churches have been serving. This is one ministry that has really grown since we moved the tables outside during the pandemic.

Serving for Christ,
Ericka Gardner

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

We have one of those special years where Christmas Eve Falls on a Sunday! Our morning worship at 10:30 AM will be a traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service. Please join us on Christmas Eve Morning for our Sunday morning worship, Christmas Eve Style.

There will also be another service at **9:00 PM** that night. Please note the new earlier time this year. This service will also be a traditional Candlelight Service just an hour and a half earlier than last year.



Contribution Envelopes for 2024

If you would like to continue receiving contribution envelopes please call the church office. We have them ready for 2024! This is the time we order them for 2025. If you would like to discontinue envelopes let us know and we will not order you envelopes for 2025. Many online donors may not want their envelopes anymore so please let us know.

Annual Reports for 2023

The committees listed in below are asked to turn in a brief recap of the year's activities to share with our members in our annual report. Please share a brief summary of the events this year for our annual report to the church office or email to: office@immanueleaston.com by **January 10th, 2024**. Thank you very much!

Audit Committee, Blood Drive, Caruthers Fair, Congregational President, Deacons, FCA Lunch Ministry, Financial Secretary, Easton Food Distribution, Library, Music Committee, Fellowship Lunch, Nominating Committee, Small Group Ministry, Sunday School, Treasurer, Trustee, Ummata Events, Women's Ministry and any Other Programs happening at Immanuel that aren't listed.

Family Camp 2024

We have the dates, mark your new calendars and let's plan to spend some time in the great outdoors! **June 7-14, 2024**. Come when you can and leave when you must. Let's dream big and plan our camping vacation at Loggers Flat today by mark our new calendars now.

Attention Thrivent Members

Thrivent offers 2 opportunities for Grant Dollars to each member each year. That's \$500.00, \$250.00 per grant, to go towards raising money for organizations in need. Apply today we will use them in 2024! Don't waste your 2023 Grant dollars. If you are a Thrivent Member and you are interested in retrieving your Grant Dollars for a mission event or fund raiser through our church please call the church office and we will guide you through the process. We could team up and use our grant dollars to fully fund something for our community! We can request the funds now and plan the fundraiser in January.

News Notes

Congratulations to Happy 45th anniversary to **JON & SANDY MARTHEDAL** on December 30th.

John and Sharon Reynolds made a quick trip to Oklahoma for a memorial service for John 's cousin in the middle of October. They spent 4 nights in S/W Oklahoma visiting relatives. They actually saw a LIVE armadillo grazing by the side of the road. **The end of October they flew to Hawaii** (the big island) and spent 9 nights there. The first 4 nights were spent at Kilauea Military Camp within Volcanos National Park. It was built as a military camp in 1916 and was used as many things through out the years. Kilauea volcano was not active while they were there so just some steam was visible at the caldera. They then traveled over the island to Kona and spent 5 nights in an ocean front condo, which had beautiful ocean views and sunsets. One day they traveled to the northern part of the island for a tour of a vanilla farm and a vanilla inspired lunch. It's truly amazing how much work is involved in growing vanilla orchids. The next evening they did a sunset dinner cruise, which was quite fun and the dinner was delicious. On Sunday they went to church at the only Lutheran church in the area. It has a beautiful ocean view which made it a little harder to pay attention to the sermon. The trip home was uneventful, which is always a bonus.

Council positions available in January 2024. If you would like more information about Immanuel and serving on the council leadership board please talk to Pastor Taylor, John Jensen, Karl Nielsen, Daniel Hartwig or Betty Moore regarding the upcoming council member positions available as well as the responsibilities for each of the positions available.

The Danish American Historical Society of California will host their annual Danish Christmas Dinner on Sunday, December 10th in the Selma's Pioneer Village Entry Building by the DAHSC Museum. Tickets are \$32.00 per person and \$12.00 for kids 12 and under. You may pay at the door but advance reservations must be made by December 4th, please call Laurel Jacobsen at (559) 240-8818 or lolli707@comcast.net. There will be a great gift shop for your special Christmas shopping fun.

Christmas Craft Sunday For Kids

**December 10th at
9:30 AM in Grace Hall
All Ages are welcome!
Come and make Christmas
Craft Projects to celebrate the
birth of our Savior!**



DECEMBER 2023

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

					1 12:00-2:00PM Easton Food Distribution	2 10:00-3:00PM Social Hall Reserved 4:00-8:00PM Social Hall Reserved
3 9:30AM Sunday School in Grace Hall 9:30AM Children's Craft Day 9:40AM Choir Practice 10:30AM Worship & Communion	4 7:00PM NA in Grace Hall	5	6 Immanuel serves FCA lunch	7 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study	8	9 Social Hall Reserved All Day
10 9:30AM Sunday School in Grace Hall 9:40AM Choir Practice 10:30AM Worship & Communion 11:45AM Fellowship Time 12:00PM Congregational Prayer in Sanctuary	11 7:00PM NA in Grace Hall	12 9:00AM Women's Bible Study in church Library. 7:00PM Church Council Meeting	13 Immanuel serves FCA lunch	14 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study	15 January Chimes Deadline	16 Social Hall Reserved 3:00-9:00 PM.
17 9:30AM Sunday School in Grace Hall 10:30AM Worship & Communion 11:30AM Choir Practice 11:45AM Fellowship Time	18 7:00PM NA in Grace Hall	19 9:00AM Women's Bible Study in church Library.	20	21 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study	22	23
24 10:30AM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 10:00AM Choir Practice 10:30AM Worship & Communion 11:30AM Fellowship Time 9:00PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 7:00PM NA in Grace Hall	26 No Women's Bible Study today.	27	28 6:00 AM Men's Bible Study 12:00PM Fellowship Lunch in Social Hall	29	30