

# Welcome to Immanuel Lutheran Church

*Immanuel means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23)*

**Proclaiming the Good News of  
Jesus Christ since 1888**

**December 24, 2023**



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Easton (Fresno), CA. 93706

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Sunday Schedule:  
Sunday School 9:30am  
Worship 10:30am

**Welcome!** Wherever you are; whether at home and on-line, or joining us in our beautiful sanctuary, we welcome you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ! We are united as a people of God in worship as a Body of Christ, the Church. May God grant you safety and protection during these unprecedented times. Immanuel follows the current Centers for Disease Control Guidelines during the pandemic and they recommend that wearing a mask at all indoor gatherings is optional. Please share our worship opportunities with your family and friends and those who don't know the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

**Immanuel is a member of the North American Lutheran Church** whose Core Values are: Christ-Centered, Mission-Driven, Traditionally-Grounded, and Congregationally-Focused.

**Holy Communion** is celebrated every Sunday and other special occasions of the church year. If you have received instruction concerning the Lord's Supper, you are welcome to receive this sacrament here. If you would like to learn about either baptism or communion, please speak with the pastor following the service or check the box on the worship registration form to schedule an appointment. Only non-alcoholic wine is used in communion at Immanuel.

**Moms and Dads**, we love children and we welcome children to worship with you and the whole congregation. If you so desire, we do have a nursery – the room with the large window next to the Library at the back of the sanctuary. In there is a rocking chair, toys, as well as a speaker and large window so you can see and hear the service. Your kids may enjoy the activity bags on the rack at the back of the church.

**To learn more about Immanuel** please be sure to fill out the worship registration slip on the back page of your bulletin and place it in the offering bag as you exit the sanctuary or fill out the guest registry located in the church entry.

**Restroom facilities** are located in the church entry (the narthex). When walking out of the sanctuary take a left and they are at the end of the short hallway.

**Join us** outdoors immediately following our worship service where we can greet you more personally.

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Prelude**

Laurel Jacobsen

**Ring the Bell and Welcome**

Pastor Taylor Stempniak

**Brief Order of Confession and Forgiveness** (*Matthew 28:19; 1 John 1:8-10*)

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen**

Pastor: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*Silence for reflection*

**All: Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

## **Opening Hymn and Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

**“Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel”**

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 34 verses 1-2*

Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might,  
Who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times once gave the law  
In cloud, and majesty, and awe. *Refrain*

CCLI Song # 31999 Charles Wesley | Rowland Hugh Prichard Words: Public Domain; Music: Public Domain

## **Apostolic Greeting (2 Corinthians 13:14)**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

## **Prayer of the Day**

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the hinderance of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**All: Amen.**

## **Reading of the Word**

### **The First Reading**

### **2 Samuel 7:1-11,16**

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.” <sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and

I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

**All: Thanks be to God**

**Hymn**

**Oh Come, Oh Come Emmanuel**

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 34 verses 3-4*

Oh, come, strong Branch of Jesse, free  
Your own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell your people save  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

Oh, come, blest Dayspring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by your advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight. *Refrain*

**The Gospel**

**Luke 1:26-38**

Reader: The Holy Gospel, according to Saint Luke the First chapter.

**All: Glory to you, O Lord**

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and

said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

P: The Gospel of the Lord

**All: Praise to you, O Christ**

**Hymn**

**Take My Life That I May Be**

*Lutheran Book of Worship Page 406 verses 1-3*

Take my life, that I may be  
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
Take my moments and my days;  
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move  
At the impulse of thy love;  
Take my feet and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice and let me sing  
Always, only, for my King;  
Take my lips and let them be  
Filled with messages from thee.

## **The Gospel**

**Luke 1:46-55**

Pastor: The Holy Gospel, according to Saint Luke the First chapter.

### **All: Glory to you, O Lord**

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
<sup>47</sup>my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
<sup>48</sup>for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed:  
<sup>49</sup>you, the Almighty, have done great things for me  
and holy is your name.  
<sup>50</sup>You have mercy on those who fear you,  
from generation to generation.  
<sup>51</sup>You have shown strength with your arm  
and scattered the proud in their conceit,  
<sup>52</sup>casting down the mighty from their thrones  
and lifting up the lowly.  
<sup>53</sup>You have filled the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
<sup>54</sup>You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,  
to remember the promise of mercy,  
<sup>55</sup>the promise made to our forebears,  
to Abraham and his children forever.

P: The Gospel of the Lord

### **All: Praise to you, O Christ**



## Homily

Pastor Taylor Stempniak

*Please stand as you are able, for the hymn of the day.*

## Hymn

### **“Canticle of the Turning”**

My soul cries out with a joyful shout  
That the God of my heart is great,  
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things  
That you bring to the ones who wait.  
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,  
And my weakness you did not spurn,  
So from east to west shall my name be blest.  
Could the world be about to turn?

### ***Refrain***

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.  
Let the fires of your justice burn.  
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn.**

Though I am small, my God, my all,  
You work great things in me,  
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past  
To the end of the age to be.  
Your very name puts the proud to shame,  
And to those who would for you yearn,  
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,  
For the world is about to turn. ***Refrain***

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat  
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## **Sharing of the Peace** *(John 20:19-21)*

Pastor: Peace be with you

**All: And also with you**

Pastor: Let us share God's peace with one another.

*Please be seated*

## **Offering**

*Offerings and worship registration slips found on the back page of the bulletin may be placed in the plate as it is passed by the ushers. There is a QR Code printed on the back of the bulletin for those wishing to donate online through our website.*

**Special Music**      **“May We Enter The Stable?”**      Christmas Ensemble

## **Offertory Response**

**“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow”**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise him all creatures here below;  
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## **Offertory Prayer**

*Pastor: Let us pray. Merciful Father,*

**All: we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

# HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you

**All: And also with you**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts

**All: We lift them to the Lord**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

**All: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**Communion Preface** (2 Timothy 4:22, Colossians 3:1, Psalm 136)

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to anew and radiant vision of your glory; that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Sanctus** (Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9)

*Lutheran Book of Worship front section page 89*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of power and might:**

**Heaven and Earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest**

**Words of Institution**

*(1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20)*

Pastor: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciple, saying: Take and eat;

this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: this cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

**All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**The Lord's Prayer** (*Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4*)

Pastor: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### **Communion Distribution**

*Communion will be served this week by intinction. Please follow the direction of the ushers, as you come to the altar the host will be dipped in the non-alcoholic wine and served to you by Pastor or a Deacon. Immanuel welcomes you to communion this morning.*

## **Communion Hymns**

### **“Lamb of God” (John 1:29)**

*Page 92 in the front section of Lutheran Book of Worship.*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

### **Away in a Manger**

*Lutheran Book of Worship, page 67*

## **Post Communion Blessing**

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**All: Amen**

## **Post Communion Canticle “Thank the Lord”**

Thank the Lord and sing his praise;

Tell everyone what he has done.

Let everyone who seeks the Lord

Rejoice and proudly bear his name.

He recalls his promises and

Leads his people forth in joy

With shouts of thanksgiving.

Alleluia. Alleluia.

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## **Post Communion Prayer**

Pastor: Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen**

**Entry into Christmas**

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Quirinius was governor of Syria). And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into, Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 41 Verse 1*

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**Shepherd’s March – Original Composition****Micah Bennetts**

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid.

**Angels We Have Heard on High**

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 71 verse 1 and refrain*

And the angels said unto them:

“Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior,

which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

### **Oh Come All Ye Faithful**

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 45*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him, born the king of angels:

#### *Refrain*

**O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

The highest, most holy, light of light eternal,  
Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;  
Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n!  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2  
Words & Music Public Domain

**Benediction** (*Numbers 6:24-26*)

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen!**



## Candlelight Hymn

## Joy to the World

*Lutheran Book of Worship page 39*

### Distribution of Candlelight

*Lighting of the Candles: tip only unlit candles to receive the flame. Please: try not tip lit candles as they tend to drip wax on the pews and carpets. Please keep candles upright until the ushers collect them as you are leaving the sanctuary.*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her king;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n and nature sing,  
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness  
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
And wonders, wonders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Words & Music Public Domain

**Dismissal** (*Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:4, Romans 12:1, John 12:26, Matthew 28:16-20*)

*P. Go in peace and serve the Lord!*

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen, Amen, Amen**

**Postlude**

**Laurel Jacobsen**

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## **Announcements**

**The Flowers on the altar** this morning are presented by the Salwasser Family for glory and honor to God and in celebration of the daughter-in-law, Megan's birthday today.

**Prayer focus this week 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.

**The next Fellowship Luncheon** will be this Thursday, **December 28th** at noon in the Social Hall. Please sign up today.

**Women's Bible Study will be on Christmas break for a week. We gather again 9:00AM on January 3rd.** Join Pastor Taylor as we continue a study about the Lord's Prayer & Christian Life.

**This year the Christmas Special Offering will be sent to Iglesia Lutreana Santa Cruz in Santa Maria California.** This is a migrant farmer congregation in need of support. For more information about this church please see the Christmas Offering article in the December Chimes. **Please note on your check Christmas offering or place cash in a marked envelope for Christmas offering.**

**There will be a Christmas Eve Candlelight service tonight at 9:00PM in the sanctuary.**

**Prayers for 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, 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:** Bobbie Beshears, Sandy Britter, Ed Bordin, Crystal Burns, Gaye Cissel, Steve Fletcher, Amanda Garcia, Kristen Gibson, Ed Gomez, Pat Griffin, Josh Hammers, Jim Hansen, Jan Kersgaard, Paul Jones, Donna Kennedy, Marcus Miranda, Joann Ortega, Gloria Payne, Larry Pickens, Patti Price, Bob Reynolds, Pastor Amy Schifren, Rebecca Stempniak, & Keitt Wilson.

**For those morning the loss of loved ones:** The family of Janice Robinson, *Shirley Rasmussen’s daughter*, and the family of Sally Caglia, *Nick’s aunt* and Marian Lawrence, *Jackie’s aunt*

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

Name _____	Date _____
Address _____	Phone _____
City / State / Zip _____	Email _____
Names / ages of Children living at home _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1st Time Guest	<input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Time or Regular Attender
<input type="checkbox"/> Member I came as a guest of _____	
Home Congregation _____	

## This Week at Immanuel

### **Today:**

10:30AM Worship & Communion  
11:30AM Fellowship Time Outside

### **Monday:**

7:00PM NA meet in Grace Hall

### **Tuesday**

No Women's Bible Study this week.

### **Wednesday**

### **Thursday**

6:00AM Men's Bible Study in Social Hall  
**12:00PM Fellowship Luncheon**

### **Next Sunday: Christmas Eve**

10:30AM Worship & Candlelight Service  
11:30AM Fellowship Time Outside  
9:00PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

### **Worship Assistants This Week:**

**Ushers:** Lee Terkelsen, Randy McFarland

**Greeters:** All of Immanuel

**Sound & Technology:** Allys, Fred, & Gina

**Scripture Reader:** Fred Cogan

**Fellowship Servers:** Donna & Dale Ewing

**Council Lock Up for December:** Daniel Hartwig

### **Worship Assistants Next Week:**

**Ushers:** Lee Terkelsen, Randy McFarland

**Greeters:** All of Immanuel

**Sound & Technology:** Allys, Fred, & Gina

**Scripture Reader:** Fred Cogan

**Fellowship Servers:** Lee Terkelsen



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giving!

Please ☐ check the appropriate box and write your message in the space below.

☐ I want to learn more about faith.

☐ I want to receive the monthly newsletter ("The Chimes")

☐ I am receiving communion today

☐ I **want** to speak with the parish nurse

☐ I have a message for (circle:) the office / the pastor

☐ I have a prayer request: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I have hymn suggestions: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I want to learn more about baptism

☐ I want to become a member of Immanuel

☐ I want a visit from the visitation pastor

☐ I want to speak with the pastor