



Immanuel Messenger

Immanuel Lutheran Church

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A Word from the Pastor

Advent: A Season of Longing

I love this time of year. I bet you do too. For many of us, it does our heart good to see the blue paraments of Advent. We coming strolling into the church, and voilà, things are different, a bit more simple. Our lovely altar flowers are replaced by the winter greens, our Kyrie is plain chant, and we follow the advice of the LBW *Manual on the Liturgy* in omitting the Hymn of Praise during this penitential season.

There is a spirit of absence and longing about Advent, but an absence that is soon to be filled. We await Christmas. It is not yet here, but there is a smile in our hearts because soon it will be. We await the Second Coming of Jesus. If we are heartsick with wars and rumors of wars and earthquakes and storms and divers disruptions on earth, then we await the Second Coming with even more earnestness.

Underlying our longing for the presence of Christ, I think there is another longing: that we should become better people. Too long have we been old, as in the Old Adam and the Old Eve. It is time for us to become more young and innocent. It is time for renewal. We can catch this note of renewal in our Advent “Prayers of the Day,” as in this one for the Fourth Sunday of Advent:

- ☐ Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away *the hindrance 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. **Amen.**

Who would have thought to describe our sins that way, as “hindrances”? But they are, and we know it to be so. We will be happier and stronger, and our world will be better off when we cast off those sins.

Let us try evermore to be done with our sins. Let us do as one of the post-communion prayers puts it: acknowledge Jesus as “a model of the godly life” and seek to “conform our lives to his.” One of the very best things about you and me is a holy longing within us to become more Christ-like. Let us yield to Advent’s holy longing and be happy at our Lord’s approach, both at Christmastime, in the Blessed Sacrament, and at the Second Coming of Jesus.

In Christ,

Gregory Fryer

Pastor Gregory P. Fryer

Christmas Caroling at Lenox Hill Hospital

Friday, December 14, 2012 -- 7:00 p.m.

On Friday, December 14th, let’s meet in the lobby of Lenox Hill Hospital (100 East 77th Street) at 7:00 p.m. for our annual Christmas caroling and fellowship gathering. After caroling there, we are invited to the church parsonage (108 East 82nd Street, Apt. 7C) for some refreshments, fellowship, and sitting around the fireplace. Alas, we are not supposed to bring children into the hospital, but otherwise, everyone is welcome!

Hanging of the Greens

Workers needed

Saturday afternoon, December 15th, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

We have no set work crew for this important and gratifying work session we call “Hanging of the Greens.” We wait with eagerness for you to appear, if you can. “Many hands make light work.” Plus, it is fun to clean and decorate the church, to listen to the Christmas music as we work, to enjoy the sights and smells of the Christmas trees, and to see things come together for the great festival.

We plan to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas on Saturday, December 15th. Welcome, everyone. After decorating the church, we enjoy our popular St. Nicholas Party.

St. Nicholas Party

5 to 9 p.m., Saturday, December 15, after the Hanging of the Greens

Our annual St. Nicholas Party is becoming a very popular event for us here at Immanuel. Swing with David Buddin at this year's party featuring David on piano, Al Quirong on tenor sax, Gaku Takanashi on bass, Ray Roberts on drums and vocalist Vi Quirong. The band will play from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. followed by a Christmas carol sing-a-long, and supper with hams and pot-luck side dishes and desserts. We are going to need some work crews, including setup, kitchen, and cleanup afterwards. Hold the date!

Children's Sunday

Lessons and Carols

To be sung by both the Children's Choir and the Adult Choir
The Third Sunday of Advent, Sunday, December 16th

The Third Sunday of Advent is fast becoming a favorite for us here at Immanuel: We are led then by the children! In the past three years, the sermon slot has been filled with something even nicer: a children's Christmas Pageant or Lessons and Carols. This year we are going to enjoy Lessons and Carols, led by our children.

We will have an international emphasis, with hymns and clothing from around the world. People throughout the congregation are invited to wear international clothes that day.

The Children's Choir and the Adult Choir plan to sing carols from many different countries. Immanuel's Children's Choir, under the direction of Tiffany Rosenquist de la Torre and Jim Miller, will be delighting us with their voices. Come and hear some familiar, and not so familiar, tunes!

Following the service the Board of Deacons and the Sunday School are hosting an international buffet. Congregation members are invited to bring a dish reflecting their heritage to coffee hour. These dishes can be dropped off in the kitchen before service on December 16. There will be index cards provided so that people may write the name of the dish and the country of origin. Members are welcome to dress in traditional clothing of their culture. We are also expecting a Special Visitor for the children.

Fraternité Notre Dame Toy Collection

Once again this year the Sisters of the Fraternité Notre Dame will be hosting a Christmas party for needy children. This year the party will be on Friday, December 14. They are asking for donations of new toys. If you can give a toy, please wrap it and mark it as to the age of the child and whether it is for a boy or girl. (Please no guns or violent toys.) The Sisters will also accept toiletries or clothing as they distribute gifts to the hospitalized and homeless as well. No need to wrap these. You may leave your gifts in the narthex on Sunday mornings, or bring them to the church office during the week. The last day for bringing gifts is Sunday, December 9th, as the Sisters will pick them up from the church office on Monday morning, December 10th.

Sunday School Mitten Tree

The Sunday School will have a mitten tree once again this year. Please give the mittens you bring to one of our Sunday School teachers. The mittens will be given to the Fraternité Notre Dame who will distribute them to needy children. The mitten tree will be put up during the Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 15th.

Poinsettias and Music Fund

The church is decorated at Christmas with a lighted tree and poinsettias. Members and friends may wish to place one or more poinsettia plants in the church to honor the memory of departed loved ones or simply as a gift to the glory of God in the incarnate Christ. A gift of \$15.00 for each plant as well as gifts toward the Christmas Music Fund will be received by Ester Neubacher after church on Sunday, December 9th and Sunday, December 16th.

Mozartian Masterpieces

Chamber Orchestra Concert here at Immanuel
Saturday, December 29th, at 8:00 p.m.

ARTEK will be presenting a special chamber orchestra concert, Mozartian Masterpieces, on Saturday December 29th, at 8:00 p.m., here at Immanuel. Gwendolyn Toth will not only be directing the orchestra, but she and her husband Dongsok Shin will perform Mozart's Concerto #7 for two pianos. Sarah Chalfy, soprano and member of the Immanuel Choir, will also be singing a concert aria and the motet *Exsultate Jubilate*. Regular tickets for this concert

are \$25, but a number of free tickets have been set aside for Immanuel members. See Parish Secretary Karen Rombey to pick up your tickets today!

A Small-Group Bible Study

On The Sermon on the Mount

Led by Irene Zimmer, starting 8 p.m. Wednesday evening, January 9, 2013

In the home of Irene Zimmer and Douglas Puffert

Irene has experienced and enjoyed small-group Bible Study in a home setting. Now she is offering to lead such a study in her home. Small groups are great! They strengthen community, provide mutual support, and encourage and inspire members in Christian discipleship.

Once you reach our church, you do not have far to go to get to Irene and Douglas's apartment. They are in the same building as our church office building, next door to the church.

This small group will follow the Serendipity Bible Study "The Sermon on the Mount: Examining Your Life." If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Parish Secretary Karen Rombey so that we can order the books. Karen's church phone number is 212-289-8128, and her email is krombey@juno.com.

Pastor Fryer

Looking Ahead

The First Two Sundays of Immanuel's 150th Anniversary

Transfiguration Sunday, February 10, 2013

Valentine's Sunday, February 17, 2013

A happy time is ahead of us: the 150th Anniversary of our dear church, Immanuel Lutheran Church. At the recent November Voters' Assembly, our Anniversary Committee gave an overview of the coming celebrations, which commence Transfiguration Sunday this winter and culminate Reformation Sunday this coming autumn.

Let me lift up the first two of those celebrations. Transfiguration Sunday is the official birthday Sunday for our church. Right there in the midst of the Civil War, our Lutheran ancestors established our congregation and began worshipping on Transfiguration Sunday (February 11, back then, 1863). Our distinguished guest preacher for this upcoming Transfiguration Sunday will be our only other surviving Senior Pastor, Rev. Thomas Nelson Green. We have been blessed by his preaching in recent years here for the Good Friday liturgies.

Four days later, it is Valentine's Day. It has been a good while since we have held a reunion Sunday for couples I have married during my time here at Immanuel. Let's do it again, this anniversary year. The closest Sunday to Valentine's Day is February 17, so let's aim for that date. The sermon topic will be will be Love, and I am planning a Coffee Hour presentation then called "The Love Story of Martin and Katie." I sure hope you can all make it then.

Pastor Fryer

The Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve

6:30 p.m., Monday, December 24, 2012
With Pre-Service Music at 6:00 p.m.

Christmas Morning

11 a.m., Tuesday, December 25, 2012

Name of Jesus

11 a.m., Tuesday, January 1, 2013

Epiphany

11 a.m., Sunday, January 6, 2013