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Board of Directors: Peter Renner (Chair), David Meyer (V-Chair), Marilynne Stinson (Sec), Dirk Wilmoth, Brooke Jud, Stephen Taylor, Neil Pursley, Eugene Edwards, & Ed Lopez



Emmanuel Lutheran
CHURCH & SCHOOL
ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

December 24, 2023
7pm Blended & 10pm Traditional
Christmas-Eve Candlelight Service

www.emmanuellutheran.info

Our Vision:

Fully Engaged, Biblically Passionate,
Driven to Serve

CALENDAR

Monday, December 25
CHRISTMAS DAY!
> 10:00am Traditional Service (sanctuary)

Tuesday, December 26
2pm Hardesty Bible Study

Wednesday, December 27
No Midweek Noon Service

Thursday, December 28
N/A

Friday, December 29
No Pickleball in December; Resumes January

Saturday, December 30
N/A

Sunday, December 31—New Year's Eve!
> 10:00am Traditional Service (sanctuary)
Food Pantry OPEN

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Skopak
Director of Christian Education: Alexi Lundquist
Principal: Mark Edmiston
Early Childhood Director: Christine Smith
Church Choir & Handbell Director: A.L. Brown
Praise/Worship Music/Band Director: Heather Meulenberg
Organist: Lula Meulenberg

12/24/23 Server Schedule:

<u>SERVERS</u>	<u>10 AM</u>	<u>7 PM</u>	<u>10 PM</u>
Acolytes:	Elia Y.	Mason F.	TBD
Lectors:	Wendy H.	Susan R.	David M.
Ushers:	Mike R. & Rich B.	Joel H. & Doug P.	Jim & Brooke Reaves
Communion:	Bill H. & Bradley H.	Susan R. & Jim M.	David M.
Elders:	Vaughn S.	Susan R.	Kevin L.

December Altar Guild

8:30am Dana Novak
1:00am Kelly Kanelos

December Offering Counters

The Meyer's

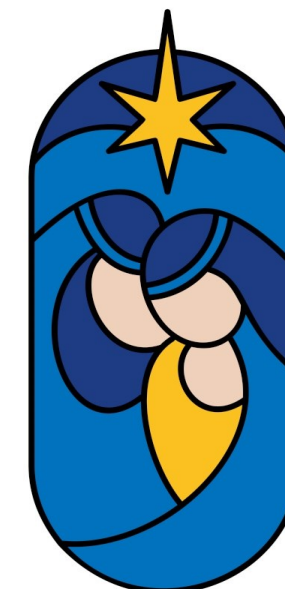
Tech /Sound Crew

7:00pm - Justin Pruitt and Peter Linton



“The Diamond Found in the Manger”

Luke 2:8-14



Upcoming Member Celebrations!

BIRTHDAYS: 2/24 Fligel, Zachary; 12/24 Jennejahn, Marni; 12/24 Lichtenberger, Carol; 12/26 Buckner, Dylan; 12/27 Brock, Susan; 12/28 Skopak, Amy; 12/29 Clough, Richard; 12/30 Allen, Eli; 12/30 Meulenberg, Hans

This Month's Non-Agenarian (90+)! 12/21 Kostenbauder, Marqueen

ANNIVERSARIES: 12/27 Roseman, James & Barbara
12/27 Waldkoetter, Frederick & Beth

Last Service Attendance & Stats

Last Week's On-Campus Attendance

Last Sunday: 8:30am— 58 persons; 11:00am—70 persons

Last Wednesday: 12pm & 7pm— 25 persons

Last Sunday's Website & FaceBook Hits*

Website 8:30am— 22 11am— 20

Facebook: 8:30am— 63 11am— 77

Food Pantry Grad N Go, VRQ, & Costello, Served:

Mon. 12/11 – Sun. 12/17: 408 homes; 656 individuals

Total DEC 2023 served: 1,053 homes: 2,502 people

Last Week's Offerings

General Weekly Offering needed: \$ 12,817.31

Last week General Offering received: \$ 9,000.25

Building Funds Received: \$ —

DECEMBER 24, 2023

10 AM Traditional Service (4th Sunday in Advent)

3 PM Children & Families "STICKERBOOK" Christmas-Eve Service

7 PM Blended CANDLELIGHT Christmas-Eve Service

10 PM Traditional CANDLELIGHT Christmas-Eve Service



MERRY
Christmas



THANK YOU CHURCH BODY, for your good and faithful (and caring!) servitude towards our Angel Tree mission this year!
"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us." *Ephesians 3:20*



Emmanuel Lutheran Church Grab & Go Food Pantry

Next open date:

Sunday 12/31 - New Year's Eve

1 - 3pm



- > **More Sunday Server Volunteers needed!**— Please contact the Church Office if interested <
- > **New 2024 Altar Flower Sign Up sheet (Jan-April)** - posted in the Narthex now! <
- > **Offering Envelope Reminder:** Starting January 2024, offering envelopes will be mailed every other month instead of quarterly. If you receive offering envelopes, the first 2024 mailing will include envelopes for Jan. & Feb.

Contact the Church Office for how to sign-up!

4th GRADE
WANTS
YOUR
USED
BOOKS!
NOW UNTIL JANUARY 5TH

Big Lutheran School Basketball Tournament at ELS

JAN. 12-14, 2024!



Volunteers needed for Concessions & Admissions!

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 24, 2023

CHRISTMAS-EVE

10:00 PM

Christ Came to Earth

AS WE GATHER

Christmas is a celebration of love. Loving thoughts and deeds certainly are part of this holy season as goodwill among people seems more pronounced than at other times of the year. What is the source of that love? It is the love of God that is fully expressed in Christ Jesus, the babe in the manger. For centuries, hymn writers and poets have found meaningful ways of describing that love of God. A poem by English writer Christina Rossetti simply but beautifully shares the Gospel truth that blesses this season.

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign. (LW 46:1)

Through the words of gifted hymn writers and poets and the evangelists Luke and Matthew, we hear the angels and we see the star. Once again, the message of God's love echoes in our world!

CALL TO WORSHIP O, Holy Night A. L. Brown, solo

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN O Come All Ye Faithful LSB 379

- 1 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
- ref O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him,
 Christ the Lord!
- 2 Highest, most holy,
 Light of Light eternal,
 Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
 Son of the Father
 Now in flesh appearing! Refrain
- 3 Sing, choirs of angels,
 Sing in exultation,
 Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
 Glory to God
 In the highest: Refrain
- 4 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

INVOCATION

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

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES *John 1:14; Psalm 96:3; Psalm 98:1*

Pastor: And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

People: **and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

Pastor: Declare His glory among the nations,

People: **His marvelous works among all the peoples!**

Pastor: Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done marvelous things!

People: **His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Joined in worship on this sacred night, let us make confession to our heavenly Father, confident of His forgiveness for Jesus' sake.

Pastor: Almighty Father,

People: **we confess that we are sinners by nature and by thought, word, and deed. We have not always given You the best of what we have and are, and have not fully made room for You in our lives. With repentant hearts, we turn to You for mercy, seeking Your grace. In Your loving kindness forgive, restore, and lead us so that we may be renewed and live to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Pastor: With joy I announce God's Good News to You. Our gracious God in His mercy has given His Son to be born, to live, and then to die for you and to rise again in glory. For His sake God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Be at peace and rejoice in the Lord.

People: **Amen.**

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING*Isaiah 7:10–14*

¹⁰ Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” ¹³ And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE*1 John 4:7–16*

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL*Luke 2:1-14*

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the second chapter.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

² In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, ⁶ who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY "Angels We Have Heard on High" LSB 368

- 1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply,
Echoing their joyous strains. Refrain
- ref Gloria in excelsis Deo.**
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. Refrain

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt.; French | Text: Public domain

SERMON: "The Diamond Found in the Manger" Luke 2:8-14

CREED *Apostles' Creed*

People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life T everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child" LSB 374

- 1 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
There He lay, the Undefined,
To the world a stranger.
Such a babe in such a place,
Can He be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race
Who have found His favor.
- 2 Angels sang about His birth,
Wise Men sought and found Him;
Heaven's star shone brightly forth
Glory all around Him.

- Shepherds saw the wondrous sight,
Heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night,
All the hills were ringing.
- 3 Gentle Mary laid her child
Lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined
But no more a stranger.
Son of God of humble birth,
Beautiful the story;
Praise His name in all the earth;
Hail the King of glory!

Text: Joseph Simpson Cook, 1859-1933 | Text: Public domain

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

Pastor: Blessed are You, O Lord our God, for the mercy You show us in Jesus Christ, Your Son and our King.

People: **You have rescued us from the guilt of our sins and revealed Your mercy to us in the cross and resurrection of our Savior.**

Pastor: As we await His final coming, we gather before You to remember His sacrifice for us. Prepare our hearts to receive the redemption He provides through His body and blood. Hear us as we pray in His holy name and in the timeless words He has taught us:

LORD'S PRAYER *Matthew 6:9–13*

People: **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.**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

People: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us share the Peace of our Savior with each other

THE DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice [LSB 386]*

1 Now sing we, now rejoice,
Now raise to heav'n our voice;
He from whom joy streameth
Poor in a manger lies;
Not so brightly beameth
The sun in yonder skies.
Thou my Savior art!
Thou my Savior art!

2 Come from on high to me;
I cannot rise to Thee.
Cheer my wearied spirit,
O pure and holy Child;
Through Thy grace and merit,
Blest Jesus, Lord most mild,
Draw me unto Thee! Draw me unto Thee!

3 Now through His Son doth shine
The Father's grace divine.
Death was reigning o'er us
Through sin and vanity
Till He opened for us
A bright eternity.
May we praise Him there!
May we praise Him there!

4 Oh, where shall joy be found?
Where but on heav'nly ground?
Where the angels singing
With all His saints unite,
Sweetest praises bringing
In heav'nly joy and light.

Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt. | Text: Public domain

Away in a Manger *LSB 364*

- 1 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
- 2 The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh
- 3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Text (sts. 1–2): Little Children’s Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt. Text: Public domain

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

- Pastor: Let us pray.
Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son’s body and blood.
- People: Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of waiting that, on the Day of His arrival, we may rejoice forever as those You have redeemed;**
- Pastor: through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, on

READING *Luke 2:15–20*

- Pastor: When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when [the shepherds] saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.
- Pastor: Luke writes that Mary “treasured up all these things” in her heart. We are invited to do as Mary did, to treasure these things—including our worship with the joyous carols—in our hearts. Through these songs, we share the joy of sisters and brothers around the globe who join in praising Jesus Christ, our newborn King. With repeating alleluias, we give voice to our joy in the words and the music of a Bohemian carol from over five hundred years ago.

CANDLELIGHTING

Pastor: With renewing faith, growing hope, and expanding love on this most holy night, we sing
“Silent Night, Holy Night.”

HYMN “Silent Night, Holy Night” *LSB 363*

- 1 Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
- 2 Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav’nly hosts sing, Alleluia!

Christ, the Savior, is born!

Christ, the Savior, is born!

- 3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love’s pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820–85 Text: Public domain

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, who gave His Son to redeem the world; the Son, who has revealed to us God’s grace, mercy, and love; and the Holy Spirit, by whose blessed work in us we live our lives as children of God—be and remain with you, now and forever.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN “Joy to the World” LSB 387

- 1 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.

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

- 3 No more let sins and sorrows 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.

- 4 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 | Text: Public domain



Emmanuel Lutheran Prayer List The Week of December 24, 2023

HEALTH, HEALING AND OTHER NEEDS

These are people in need of prayers this week. Take them home. "Lord Jesus we commend into Your hands the needs of people that go through challenges of many kinds. You know the joys, troubles, illnesses, and fears. We now commend them to You."

(New or updated prayers are in **BOLD**)

- ◇ **Justin Hodges** (H.Hodges) **Justin is not feeling well. Admitted to the hospital on 12/20 and being released 12/22. Prayers for swift relief soon.**
- ◇ **Diana Hempel** **As of this week, has been moved to the Laurels for rehabilitation.**
- ◇ **Aaron Farmer** (B.King's friend) **Aaron has a cancer diagnosis. Prayer are for healing for him and his family.**
- ◇ Cynthia Cline Undergoing treatments for cancer. At home recovering from treatment for an infection. Prayers are or healing and comfort.
- ◇ Dee Tilley Recovering from hysterectomy on 12/13. Prayers for comfort & healing.
- ◇ Mary Hufnagle Recovering from Covid, Prayers for God's swift healing and a vibrant recovery!
- ◇ Carol Bruckner Had Spinal Surgery on 12/7. Prayers for swift healing and surgery success!
- ◇ Rick Herman Had surgery on 12/5,. Prayers for recovery.
- ◇ Patti Reece Had spinal surgery on 11/21. Prayers for full recovery!
- ◇ Tommy Ridgeway Staph infection in knee after surgery. Prayers for healing, patience, & comfort for he & Kathy.
- ◇ Betty Ude (S.Ude's Mother) Broker her hip& now in rehab. Prayers lifted high for an outpouring of love & spiritual strength over Betty.

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WITH CANCER OR LONG-TERM ILLNESSES/CONDITIONS:

- ◇ Doug Greene Lynn Case-Scott (S.Buckner's friend)
- ◇ Marilyn Saylor Richard Brinkley (S.Pruett's friend)
- ◇ Emily Nieting Ralph Ector, Snr (S.Edward's father)
- ◇ Cynthia Cline Sam Leder (V.Stinson's cousin)
- ◇ Helen Cline Muriel Williams (S.Edward's friend)
- ◇ Marjorie Locke Don Young (P/CJ Reece)
- ◇ Ken Treadway Hubert Hicks (C.Cline's friend)
- ◇ Mike Walker Ann Melious (P/H McCarthy family)
- ◇ Julia Kearley Jenny Buckner (C.Cline's neighbor)
- ◇ C.J. Reece Carol Harris (S.Ude's friend)
- ◇ Dale Wooten Robin Worley (J.Kearley's friend)
- ◇ Jan Williams (C.Waites Mother) Min Soo Lee (E.Bailey's friend)
- ◇ er) Janice (L.Giese's friend)

PRAYERS FOR THOSE WITH CANCER OR LONG-TERM ILLNESSES/CONDITIONS (cont'd.):

- Becky Presley (S.Brock's friend)
- Garret Reiser (R/Dee Gordon's family)
- Chris Alstrin (L.Schulhof's friend)
- Ralph Ector, Snr (S.Edward's father)
- Virginia Lopez (E.Lopez's mother)
- Melinda Condrey (Hufnagle's friend)
- Bob Jones (M.Stinson's uncle)
- Muriel Williams (S.Edward's friend)
- Kristen Kirby (S.Pruett's cousin)
- Antonia Simpson (L.Meulenberg's friend)
- Bob Frey (D.Wooten's friend)
- Keith Haynes (R.Rush's friend)

PRAYERS FOR OUR SEMINARIAN

- ◇ Adam Nieting & his wife Emily (Concordia Theological Seminary)

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBER BROTHERS & SISTERS

- * Dot Fastenau
- * Teenie Smathers
- * Bertha Mertens
- * Marjorie Locke
- * Jean Metcalf
- * Marjorie Yelton
- * Helen Cline
- * Tommy & Kathy Ridgeway
- * Marilyn Saylor
- * Diana & Isabelle Hempel
- * Ray & Glenda Bailey

"Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Dear Jesus, You are the great physician of body and soul. Come to those who are experiencing cancer and bring healing to their bodies. Use the gifts of medicine and doctors to work Your healing power. Lift their spirits and enable them to trust in You during this difficult time. Let them cast all their cares upon You for You care for them. For their families and caregivers, be their Encourager and Helper. Thank you Jesus, Amen.

Sharing God's Answers to Our Prayers!

Tommy and Kathy should be returning come sometime next week, and Tommy is clear of infection!

◇ = Emmanuel Lutheran Church Member

Emmanuel is a praying community. We believe the promise of God regarding His Word. If you would like to put someone on the prayer list, we need the following information:

- Your name
- Name of person to be added, and their relation to you (friend, relative, etc.)
- Nature of prayer concern (healing, grief, birth, thanks, etc.)

Please be sure to secure the person's permission before submitting their name— and to update us on their progress.

12/24/23 - 7PM

The Diamond Found in the Manger
Luke 2:8-20

Christmas comes with God's wonderful news of a lasting _____ - that peace that joins us with Him for all time. In all the excitement of Christmas we might miss that _____ and have only the outward setting but not the treasure of His love and peace.

- I. The _____ in a Manger
- A. When we highlight the center of our Christmas _____, the _____ becomes a picture of the manger
1. Finding _____ is not like looking for the needle in the haystack
 2. Peace is finding the _____ of God's Son in the straw of the manger
- B. Who else would do this but _____?
1. We _____ our important gifts and know where they are
 2. God's _____ has come to be the center of our world
 - a. Ironic: God does not put _____ safely the Temple, or on a throne in the king's palace
 - b. But he does come with the brilliant _____ of the glory of God and the _____ of heavenly angels
 - c. And its everyday, ordinary people like _____ who receive Him first
 3. And there, in the humble setting of the manger, we find the _____ that brings us peace
- II. Find This _____...
- A. To find the treasure we need to make the _____ with the Shepherds
1. When they heard the news they dashed off to the _____ and the _____
 2. And when they got there? Mary, Joseph, and the _____ laying in the straw, Jesus Christ
 3. At the moment filled with _____
- B. Can you imagine the Shepherds recounting the story of the _____ to the surprise of Mary and Joseph?!
1. And tonight we hear the story of the _____ again!

2. We too can be filled with awe and wonder and..._____!

- III. We Can Be in that _____
- A. We tonight join in the long train of Shepherds and people who have journeyed to the _____
1. As we look into the manger see _____ that is looking back at you
 2. This is not merely a hope or a wish - but the living _____ who has come into the world to bring peace to us
- B. This is the enduring _____ of Christmas
1. Presents will be exchanged; wrapping paper thrown out; and decorations taken _____
 2. BUT one thing will remain - the _____ of the World that took on flesh, laid in a manger of straw, who brings you and me peace with _____



He came to be one of us. His peace ends our _____ pursuits for possessions and power. His peace is the Lamb of God held by Shepherds, the infant Son in His _____ arms, and the same Savior held by us. Here its he gift of God, the diamond of His relationship with us, and the treasure in the arms of the _____