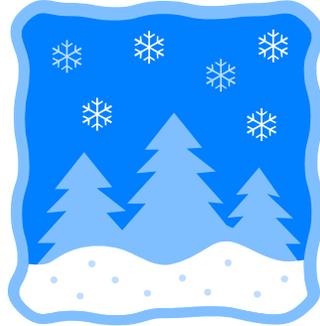


# Immanuel Lutheran Church

## DECEMBER 2017

### Messenger



Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Called, Empowered, and Sent by God to Live, Love, and Learn God's Word  
Nuestra Declaración De Misión  
Somos llamados, autorizados, y enviados por Dios para vivir, amar, y aprender la Palabra de Dios  
**Interim Pastor Arden Barden**  
360-592-5876  
Church Email: [Immanuel.everson@gmail.com](mailto:Immanuel.everson@gmail.com)

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
5782 Lawrence Rd.  
Everson, WA 98247

**REGARDING PART TIME MINISTRY**

I have always said, "There is no such thing as part time pastoral ministry, only full time pastoral ministry partly done." Living as I do three hours from Immanuel also adds to this challenge. Here are some of my current goals:

- 1) To continue to work with the Transition Team to identify possible activities and issues that might become a part of the significant use of this "in-between time." These are "congregation" concerns, not "pastor" concerns...remember: *Transition* is about the congregation; *Call* is about the pastor.
- 2) To work with the *LifeKeys* material to increase our knowing of ourselves and of one another, and in so doing, to increase our trust and function as a community of believers and servants. This is a "work-book" resource, which means that it is a guide for how we "work" to reach these results.
- 3) To identify for upcoming weeks, possible "questions" that we need to be asking ourselves as to how and why we function the way we do, especially organizationally. The Transition Team has produced an historical review to help provide a visual aid for locating some possible matters for our discussion.
- 4) To work with the Worship Committee to identify basic worship goals for these weeks. We are mostly following the current format. However, there are three differences. 1. It has been decided (with the positive feedback from our common worship on Reformation Sunday) to make every 5th Sunday a common worship at 9:00 a.m. joint worship with common fellowship hour following. 2. It has been decided to offer the surrounding community a Blue Christmas Service on December 10 at 4:00 p.m. in order to provide an opportunity for people who have faced a significant loss or crisis to give place to those "blue moods" in the midst of the Christmas Season. 3. Since Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday, it was decided to maximize our worship resources with two Christmas Eve Services: a Family Service at 10:00 a.m. and a Candlelight Service at 10:00 p.m.
- 5) To work with the Church Council in developing a nomination-election process for a Call Committee. A process was decided which would provide opportunity for members to be involved in personal thought and choice in whom and why persons might be considered for this important task. At last review, the process was only partially followed which limited our nominations. The election meeting for the congregation was re-set for December 17 following the second worship service.
- 6) To maintain visitation as a priority as much as time allows. I have strived for a balance of visitors and members as well as former members, personal needs of families and individual, hospital and home based pastoral care, and finally, referrals and requests from members for relatives and friends.
- 7) To maintain my home commitment to my "part time" status by taking the agreed upon weekends. I did serve the first eight weeks in a row to help establish a pastor-parish relationship, and both discover and provide a sense of "pastoral presence" in the Immanuel fellowship and surrounding community. Part of this is to help open the way for a broader ministry for the congregation with future pastoral leadership.

I have been "promoting" a sense of vision for Immanuel that we see ourselves not "out here in the middle of nowhere," but as "out here in the middle of somewhere." This is based on the fact that we are map-wise at the juncture of three main roads, out of which and into which funnel numerous "tributaries" for witness and service. Thus, the theme "The Church at the Cross-Roads" reflects both a sense of faith-based reality and real community-based witness and service. In encourage the congregation to "live with this notion" for the next few weeks, and to listen to how this might impact the way we think about ourselves as a congregation and the way we think about the strengths of a pastor we might choose to serve us going forward.

**THE BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 4:00 P.M.**

One of Pastor Barden's first learning-by-listening concerns is that the Nooksack Valley and surrounding hills and valleys have experienced considerable loss and crisis over the years, including some very tragic events. The depth of grief in these kinds of situations takes years to heal and to find "the new normal," if even it ever can happen. Including those who have suffered loss or challenge in this current year, this service seeks to give place for the integrity of these feelings and to surround them with hope.

Blue is the color we give to our "down mood" for this and other human dynamics. Blue is also the church's color for Hope. While the rest of the world is chanting *Merry Christmas*, and *Happy Holidays*, these blue moments take the edge off our seasonal celebrations. The purpose of the service is this to provide what we might call a "blending of the blues" in order to surround our life concerns with the hope and blessings of God's love and grace, mercy and peace.

We encourage members to make this a priority for any such moods in their own life story, and to extend the information and invitation to any whom it might serve in our extended families, persons with whom we work and play in our community, and those we may know from our own neighborhoods. The initial response to this has already been extremely positive, and the vision is that this could become an annual service that could grow in its significance and meaning for this whole area.

The earlier hour on a Sunday was chosen to provide a choice for those active in the afternoon on Sunday and for those who require evening hours for home activities.

**A FAMILY FOCUSED CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE      DECEMBER 24, 10:00 a.m.**

The special hour was chosen as a mid-morning Christmas Eve hour, with a special service to honor children and families in their hearing and celebrating the Christmas Gospel story. Pastor Barden will utilize the sermon time to give a joint adult and children message. The theme will be "Let's Open the Gift Together."

**A TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE--DECEMBER 24, 10:00 p.m.**

Carols and Candlelight have traditionally provided a more reflective atmosphere for the reading and hearing of the Christmas Story. Pastor Barden will preach by candlelight and prepare us for "spreading the light" one to one throughout the congregation. When the Service of the Word and Light is over, we will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Table. All will be accompanied by the singing of many of our Christmas Carols.

+++ To remember the times on Christmas Eve, think **10 and 10** and tell others. +++

## ***THE LIFEKEYS STUDY: "DISCOVER WHO YOUR ARE"***

This study has received good response and good discussion. It has been difficult to lead because the workbooks did not arrive on time, and so working with them has not been able to flow well. Even so, we have used the Adult Ed / Fellowship Hour to serve as the place to capture the basics of this material for ourselves and for one another. We will finish this initial portion on December 17. Perhaps we will negotiate a Saturday morning workshop or a Sunday potluck and afternoon workshop where we can "put it all together" and together draw out the implications for Immanuel in our life and ministry together, as well as any hints of what this might mean in the selecting of the new pastor. If this all goes well, a record of our "giftedness by person as well as by categories could become a "resource bank" for future involvement.



## Scripture Readings

### **December 3 - 1 Advent**

Isaiah 64:1-9  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9  
Mark 13:24-37

### **December 10 - 2 Advent**

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

### **December 17- 3 Advent**

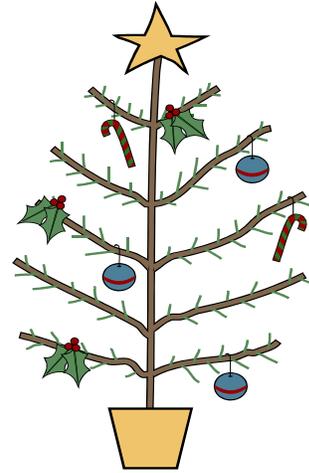
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

### **December 24 - Christmas Eve**

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

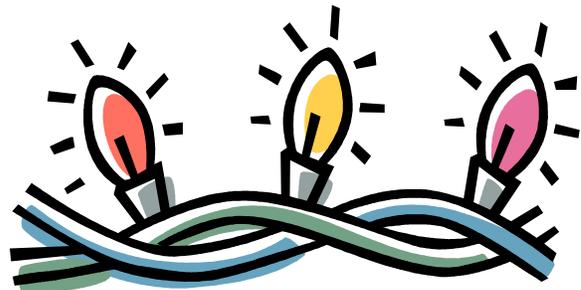
### **December 31 - 1 Christmas**

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40



## UPCOMING EVENTS and IMPORTANT DATES AT IMMANUEL:

- **Congregational Meeting after 2<sup>nd</sup> Service to elect Call Committee.**
- **December 10 – Blue Sunday Worship Service at 4:00 p.m.**
- **December 11 – Church Council meets at 6 p.m.**
- **December 24 – TWO SERVICES:  
– Family service at 10:00 A.M.**
- **TRADITIONAL CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE Service at 10:00 P.M.**



## Women of Immanuel News

- On December 10 we are having the Blue Sunday service. Please sign up to bring cookies. The leftover cookies will be given to the bachelors. Cookie sign-up sheet is on the WOI Bulletin Board.
- Remember to check your name, address, and email on the bulletin board and make corrections as needed. Thanks!



**THANK YOU!**  
**From Interfaith Coalition**

At a recent Kids Need Books distribution, a four-year-old girl sprinted across the room when she spotted the tables covered with kids' books, and began grabbing picture and board books by the handfuls. Her mother – a single mom – came and apologized. "I'm sorry if she was a little greedy, but we just got into an apartment after being homeless for months. We don't have much, but now we have books." She went on to explain, "Last night I was in our bathroom and noticed that water was leaking down from the apartment above. I watched the water drip and began to laugh, thinking, **I have a roof over my head. I have running water. My little girl has her own bed.** And I laughed until I was crying."

Your congregation participation with Interfaith Coalition makes so much possible! Eleven homes to help families like this one, bringing Family Promise to Whatcom County to help even more families, providing children's books that mean more than just a good story, winter coats, warm hats and scarves, food, and basic toiletries for those living on the streets, and the dignity and hope that powers all of us through the hard times. Thank you and blessings to you all.

**December Birthdays**

12/7 Joe Woodbury  
12/10 Helen Freeman  
12/14 Joanie Hirt  
12/18 Oswaldo Jimenez  
12/18 Jacob Short  
12/18 Dawn Durand  
12/20 Con Gates  
12/20 Lisa Bargewell  
12/22 Ben Andrews  
12/25 Ike Halverson  
12/25 Kristjan Toivola

**December Anniversaries**

12/2 Kari & Kathleen Toivola  
12/10 Jim & Jackie Bailey  
12/20 Salvador & Belia Estrada  
12/27 Gary & Martha Sirguy



**CALLING ALL ANGELS...**

**(Willing to help on Christmas Eve)  
Please let me know if you can help  
with ushering, communion, preparing  
candles, etc., at our Christmas Eve  
Services – 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 pm.  
Thank you! Kim**

**December 3      8:30 a.m.                      10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min.                      Laura Hookham  
Greeter: Muriel & Shelly      Ron & Judy Bruland  
Usher                              Ron & Judy Bruland  
Com. Asst'                      Linda Anderson  
Reader:                              Ron Bruland  
Communion Set-up: Val, Belia, Linda  
Prayer teams: First Service - Lois & Helen  
Second Service - Linda & Joanie  
Altar Flowers:

**December 10      8:30 a.m                              10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min:                      Sara Murdock  
Greeter: Pam Andrews      Kathee Toivola  
Usher:                              Kathee Toivola  
Com. Ass't:                      Karen Harkness  
Reader:                              Dennis Workman  
Communion Set Up: Belia/Val/Karen  
Prayer Teams: First Service - Jim & Lois  
Second Service - Dennis & Kim  
Altar Flowers:

**December 17      8:30 a.m.                              10:30 a.m.**

Ass't. Min:                      Don Anderson  
Greeter: Hunters              Mike & Karen Brewer  
Ushers:                              Mike & Karen Brewer  
Com. Ass't:                      Linda Anderson  
Reader:                              Kim Roe  
Communion Set Up: Valerie & Linda  
Prayer Teams: First Service - Clarice & Lois  
Second Service - Karen & Renee  
Altar Flowers:

**December 24      10:00 a.m.                              10:00 p.m.**

Ass't Min.                      ?      PLEASE LET KIM  
Greeter:                              ?      KNOW IF YOU WILL  
Usher:                              ?      BE AVAILABLE  
Com. Ass't:                      ?      CHRISTMAS EVE, AND  
Reader:                              if so which service  
Communion Set-up

**December 31      ONE SERVICE AT 9:00 A.M.**

Ass't. Min.                      Don Anderson  
Greeter:                              Ron & Judy Bruland  
Usher                              Ron & Judy Bruland  
Com. Asst'                      Linda Anderson  
Reader:                              Doug Proctor  
Communion Set-up: Val, Belia, Linda  
Healing Prayer teams: Lois/Helen & Linda/Pastor  
Altar Flowers:

**If you are unable to serve on your assigned Sunday, please call someone that you can either switch an assigned Sunday with or sub for you.**  
A big thank-you to all the helpers; you are greatly appreciated and needed!

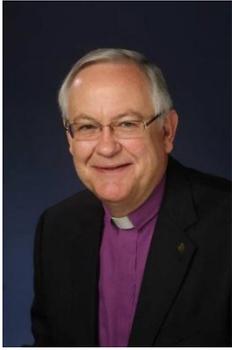
Email address for Kim: [Immanuel.everson@gmail.com](mailto:Immanuel.everson@gmail.com)  
Office phone: (360) 592-5876



*“I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live. (Psalms 116:1-2 NIV)”*

**Kulshan Chorus Presents: *Choosing Joy: A Soul Journey*, December 16, 7:30 p.m. at Bellingham High School. Tickets are available at Village Books and Community Food Coop or online at [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com).**





## Longing for the Light

The Rev. Kirby Unti, Bishop,  
NWWA Synod

From the December 2017  
edition of *The Spirit*

We are living during the wet  
and rainy winter of the year  
that longs for the light to

return to the world. A cold world that has seen  
far too many mass killings, sexual assaults,  
bullying, war and murder.

One of the things I admire most about Luther  
was his capacity to embrace the winter of his  
own life by acknowledging his own personal  
depravity. It was in coming face to face with  
his own shadow that he discovered the light of  
God's grace.

I have always counted it a great gift that I had  
the privilege of doing my Clinical Pastoral  
Education under the supervision of Dr. William  
A Miller. Bill wrote the book, "Making Friends  
With Your Shadow" where he makes the case  
that all of us have a shadow side to our lives.  
The classical understanding is that our shadow  
side is opposite and equal to what we display  
in public..

This is why it is so shocking when we discover  
the shadow of someone we hold in high  
regard.

When people refuse to own their shadow and  
reveal it to the light it grows in intensity. We  
see this in the "goody two shoes" types who  
are often the most critical of their neighbors  
while appearing to be without fault. Such  
people work over time suppressing the full truth  
of their lives and often act in secret.

Jesus was very clear about the importance of  
knowing your own shadow. He would say  
things like, "Let he who is without sin cast the  
first stone." Or he would say, "Remove the log  
from your own eye before you remove the  
speck from your neighbors."

The church ought to be the one place in the  
community where we can struggle more

honestly about the challenges of being human.  
It ought to be a place that both helps us come  
to grips with the all of what it means to be  
human and holds us accountable for  
addressing our whole lives in healthy ways.

If acknowledging one's shadow improves the  
likelihood that one will not act on isn't it equally  
true that church and country must do the  
same?

I think the answer to this is Yes.

This is why the churches of the Northwest  
issued a letter of apology to the tribes for the  
horrible and unjust ways we have treated these  
brothers and sisters.

This is why the 500<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the  
Reformation was a time for Lutherans to  
confess the horrible ways Luther depicted the  
Jews and for contributing to the violence that  
spread across Europe.

It is why delegations from the United States  
have gathered at Hiroshima and Nagasaki to  
commit to one another that never again will we  
unleash such deadly force upon another.

If we take seriously the Lutheran  
understanding of Saint and Sinner than we  
need to take more seriously how this same  
tension manifests itself in corporate ways as  
well as individual ways.

These are challenging times that we are living  
in. If we want to change let's begin with  
ourselves and own the truth of our own short  
comings. It is not just the other who needs to  
see the light. We all do.

The light came into the world and the darkness  
could not overcome it.

This is the true gift of Christmas.

Come Lord Jesus!