

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

942 Grape Avenue, Fisher, IL 61843-8512



Immanuel Lutheran Church of Osman
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
Reverend Jeffrey McPike, BCC

December 2025



From Pastor McPike's Desk....

“Rejoice, rejoice, give thanks and praise, another year of grace!”

This is the refrain of a hymn titled “Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year”, a hymn often sung closer to December 31/January 1. The sentiment is appropriate for consideration at the end of November, for the end of November is the end of the Church year. Advent begins another year - “another year of grace.” It is another year for us to celebrate God’s grace in the gift of Jesus Christ, starting with the gift of His son born in a manger, and going through the time His Son gave His life to save us. Another year of grace, because of the life, sacrificial death, miraculous resurrection and ascension and session at the right hand of God Almighty.

Advent – a time of preparation

No, it does not mean preparing for the “holiday season”, but rather looking seriously at our lives and preparing for the coming of Christ. Just as Christ came to us once as a baby in a manger, Christ comes to us in His word and in the Sacraments. He also is coming at the end of time to judge the world and call all His faithful to be with Him in heaven forever.

The prophet Joel said this in 2:13 of his book: “Rend your hearts, not your garments.” What does this mean? The Israelite people of that day were going through outward ceremony of tearing their clothes to show their sorrow over their sinful condition, but they were doing nothing about that condition. God calls for us to be genuine in our repentance.

The Lutheran Church is a liturgical church with a rich heritage of many symbols and ceremonies that can serve to support the worship of our hearts. Yet, if we do not know what they mean, they are no better than the conditions of Old Testament Israel who were “rending their garments” – showing outward signs of repentance, but not their hearts... being truly repentant in their hearts.

When you think about it, Advent takes the opportunity of the coming of the celebration of Christ’s birth on December 24/25 to encourage a four-week examination of our lives in the past and how we might want to improve our lives (resolutions?) for the future. This is the same thing that the secular world does around December 31/January 1.

I have stated before, everything we do in church means something. Let's take a look at a few of those supportive portions of worship.

Why are the altar coverings (paraments) and pastor's vestments BLUE?

Traditionally, the color of these things was purple. This is still the case in some churches. Purple is the color of penitence and sorrow. Our Savior Jesus had to come to this earth because of our sins.

Over the years, some churches have sought to make a distinction between the sorrow over sin in the Lenten season and that of Advent. Advent is also a period of joyful anticipation. Thus, royal blue has been adopted by many churches. Deeper blue continues the theme of penitence and self-reflection, but it also is a shade that suggests joy of the anticipation of the coming holiday, but more than that, the coming of Christ.

Why does Pastor chant more?

Chanting presents a formality to the church service that also is festive. The church year is divided in two. The first half runs from Advent to Pentecost. This is called the "Festival Half" of the church year. It is the time around the three great church festivals, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. "Dressing up" the services with more singing is appropriate for this time of year.

Recognizing that not everyone likes chanting, the second half of the year, from Trinity Sunday through the end of the church year, more of the pastor's parts are spoken. That way, everyone gets a bit of what they want.

Why does the Pastor wear the chasuble for only the communion part of the service?

The chasuble, the robe that matches the color of the day, is a "Eucharistic" or communion vestment. Just as people dress up for special occasions, each time the Lord Jesus comes to present to us His body and blood in the very special meal called "Lord's Supper" or "Holy Communion", so the pastor puts on a special garment to reflect the fact that the meal he is presiding over, Holy Communion, is a special event. The worship service itself is divided in two. The first half is the "Service of the Word", from the beginning to after the sermon. The second half is the "Service of the Meal", or the "Service of the Sacrament." Some pastors wear the chasuble for the entire worship service. Pastor McPike chooses to wear it for ONLY the "meal portion" to emphasize both the divided nature of the service, and the special nature of the meal.

The Hymns we Sing

The Adult Bible class continues to look briefly at every hymn in the hymnal. This is not an in-depth study on each hymn, but a survey of hymns. Starting on the First Sunday in Advent, we will look at Advent, and then Christmas hymns. Related to this is information for how worship services are planned. In January, the plan is to actually set up a projector and screen and participate with pastor working through the process of planning some of the Epiphany season services. Join us for Bible Class at 8:30 AM each Sunday.

Ladies Aid/LWML Meeting

Nine ladies met on November 14th for the Ladies Aid/LWML meeting at 1:30 PM in the fellowship hall. The common table prayer was recited before delicious refreshments were served by Deb Lammle and Sue VanWakeman. After the meeting was called to order, the LWML Pledge was recited. Deb Lammle led the devotion entitled "Living Thankfully". Marsha Warsaw led a topic on "Jesus Is Our Stronghold". Roll call was answered by a Bible verse on thanks. The minutes of the September meeting were read by secretary, Deb Martin, and approved. The mites were collected, and President Hendricks led a mite prayer on the CID grant for healing spaces for at-risk children at the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. The treasurer's report was given which showed a balance of \$2342.38. President Hendricks thanked Diana Zimmerman, treasurer, for taking care of the financial business connected to the Danville Rally that we hosted. A thank you was read from Sleep in Heavenly Peace which was the ingathering choice for the Danville Zone Rally in September and also thanks from our adopted student, Johnathan Bernau. Mission Coordinator, Terri Hooker, reported that 9 quilts have been completed for the new quilting year. The delivery of the Lutheran World Relief and Orphan Grain Train quilts was reported by Terri Hooker and President Hendricks. The group will not be quilting in December. Diana Zimmerman reported that 22 dresses have been completed for Dresses for Africa so when 50 are completed a shipment will be sent.

In the old business President Hendricks thanked Diana Zimmerman and Deb Martin for being greeters for LWML Sunday, Marsha Warsaw for being the reader, and Terri Hooker for displaying the quilts and dresses in the church. The schedule for the adopted family for 2025 which was Beth Ellis and girls from Bellflower was reviewed. New ideas for our 2026 adopted family was discussed with the group. Kathy, Mike, and Andrea Dennemann of Fisher was selected as our adopted family. The new schedule was passed around the table for members to choose a month to support this family.

In new business the ballot for election of new officers was presented by the nominating committee. The ballot was approved with no nominations from the floor. The newly elected officers are as follows: President – Deb Lammle, Secretary – Debbie Martin, Treasurer – Connie Warsaw, Mission Coordinator - Terri Hooker, and Christian Growth – Brenda Hendricks. The Christmas dinner for members and guests was discussed. It will be held at Jacks Café in Leroy on December 11th at 11:30. The group decided to collect hats, mittens, and gloves for needy causes in the communities. The group voted to donate \$100 to Lutheran Children and Family Services and \$100 to the Seminary food bank at the Seminary in Fort Wayne. The group also decided to have a soup supper before the Maundy Thursday worship service on April 2nd.

The next meeting will be held on February 12th at 1:30. The member giving the topic and the members who are hostesses will be printed in the new booklet printed by the new president.

Church Officers Needed

In January 2026 the church council will be needing names to fill the election ballot. The positions that will need to be filled on the council will be a chairman, treasurer, two elders, one trustee, and one assistant financial secretary. Be thinking about how YOU can use your talents to serve the congregation. According to our constitution, women can hold all offices except chairman and elder. There is a sign-up sheet on the back bulletin board.

Church Council Meeting

The next church council meeting will be on Wednesday, December 17th, at 6:30 PM. in the fellowship hall.

Operation Christmas Child Boxes



On Sunday, November 16th, James Amdor, CJ Genzel, Blaine Martin, and guest, Vida Kouri packed twenty-four boxes for Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child. Terri Hooker and Connie Warsaw purchased toys, personal care items, and school supplies using a Thrivent Action Team Card. A twelve lesson program entitled **The Greatest Journey** is added to the boxes at the headquarters before the boxes are shipped to many countries. This program teaches the children about Jesus and His great love for them. The boxes were taken to Gibson City Bible Church which is the nearest collection point to our church.

The shipping cost for each box which is \$10 was also paid with a Thrivent Action Team Card. Thank you to all of the members who added items to the contribution box that was at the back of the church in August and September. Thank you to Terri Hooker and Connie Warsaw for organizing this project. It is a great program to teach our children about mission work. Thank you to Brenda Hendricks, Susan Martin, and Connie Warsaw who also made boxes.

Offering Envelopes

If you have never had offering envelopes and would like some for 2026, please see Melanie Niemann or Brenda Hendricks. If you usually had offering envelopes and do NOT want any, please notify them, too. Please contact them during the first week of December so the 2026 envelopes can be organized and prepared to be handed out.

Helping Out a Neighbor

The property north of the church parking lot was purchased earlier this year by an Osman resident, Chris Robbins. In September the demolition of the house and the property clean up began. The clean up required several dumpsters. Wanting to be appreciative neighbors, the church decided to have a donation box at the back of the church for a few Sundays. Thanks to the members, \$1187 was given to Chris for part of his expenses. A big thank you also goes to Dennis Martin who donated his time and his heavy equipment to make this great improvement in Osman!

Christmas Eve Worship Service

The Christmas Eve Worship Service will be held at 7 PM on Wednesday, December 24th.

Poinsettias for the Altar



Please sign up on the sheet on the back bulletin board by December 14th if you want to donate a poinsettia to adorn the altar on Christmas Eve and the Sunday after Christmas. The cost is yet to be determined as the idea of purchasing them from a local high school greenhouse is being pursued.

Christmas Treat Bags

There will not be a need this year to donate to the Christmas treat bags that are given out on Christmas Eve. There will be a \$250 Thrivent Action Team Card used to purchase some of the items, but the majority of the items will be purchased by the Bill and Moneta McCleary Memorial Money Fund which was designated by the family for this project because they loved their Christmas Eve traditional apple and orange and various treats. The treat bags will be assembled on Wednesday, December 24th, at 8:30 AM in the fellowship hall. Everyone is invited to help assemble them.

Christmas Decorating

This year, as has been the case for quite a few years already, the church will be decorated in a sort of “progressive” manner. So, the first Sunday in Advent (November 30), the Advent Wreath and a few greens will be in the church. On the Second Sunday in Advent (December 7th) more greens will be hung. The Third Sunday in Advent (December 14th) the tree will be added. Volunteers will be needed on Saturday, December 6th at 9 AM and Saturday, December 13th at 9 AM to help with the greens and tree. The decorations will be taken down after church on Sunday, January 4th.

Adult Choir for Christmas Eve?

Would you like to sing in the choir for Christmas Eve? Choir practice will be in the choir loft after the Advent Sunday worship services. All are welcome!

Greeters

Greeters needed! There is a signup sheet on the back bulletin board if you would like to be a greeter on Sunday mornings. As it says in Hebrews 13:2 “Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”

Soup Supper Benefit

The Soup Supper Benefit, which was held on Saturday, November 8th, was an evening of good fellowship! We served over 150 hungry people with a delicious meal of soups, sandwiches, desserts, and drinks. Over twenty volunteers helped on that evening to serve our guests. Many church and community members made food for the event. The recipient was Casey Thomas and Family of Bellflower. The freewill offering collected \$8239. Church donations and Thrivent Choice Dollars will be added to this amount. The check will be given to Casey after the church service on Sunday, November 30th.

Summary of the November Council Meeting

Nine elected church officers attended the meeting on November 19th. The meeting began with a Bible reading by Pastor McPike, followed by prayer. Chairman John Lammle called the meeting to order. Debbie Lammle read the minutes from the last council meeting. With no corrections, the minutes were approved as read. Terri Hooker read the treasurer's report with total expenses for the month as \$7665.26 and total income as \$3870. The balance for the end of October was \$45,533.42. Treasurer's report was approved.

Pastor McPike informed the council that confirmation and adult Bible classes were going well. He is continuing to work on the problem that we have recording the worship service. He indicated that the problem seems to lie in the amplifier. Jeff Warsaw, trustee, will work with Pastor to see if it is repairable or needs replacement. Chairman Lammle asked Jeff Warsaw to get an updated quote on mold removal in the church so it can be added to the budget for 2026. Pastor also explained the difference between a mission statement and a vision statement.

In old business Jerry Niemann reviewed the quotes received for church insurance indicating that Brotherhood Insurance will provide better coverage but at a slightly higher cost. A motion was made and approved to proceed with getting this insurance. It will be placed on the agenda for the annual voters meeting in January. Chairman Lammle reported that the offering for Chris Robbins to help him with expenses for cleaning up the lot north of the church totaled \$1187. The check was delivered to him by Steve Martin as well as an invitation to worship with us. The Stewardship Committee reported on the income from the benefit soup supper. The amount will include the freewill offering plus Thrivent Choice dollars plus money from the Stewardship Fund that was given specifically by members for this cause. A motion was made and approved to give Casey Thomas and Family from Bellflower, our recipient, this amount. The check will be presented in the near future at the end of a worship service. The amount will be made public then. Chairman Lammle informed the council that a wheelchair has been purchased and placed in the annex.

The Mission Outreach Committee is working on several items as reported by Chairman Lammle. They are finalizing plans for a welcome area and a children's area under the balcony, and at their next meeting will be looking at outreach possibilities for 2026. Chairman Lammle thanked those who participated in the Trunk or Treat activities at Bellflower and Mahomet.

In new business a copy of the budget was handed out, and members were asked to review it for possible changes for 2026. These recommendations will be discussed at the December meeting. The Christmas decorating schedule was discussed with progressive decorating from the Advent wreath on November 30th to the greens to the tree on December 15th. The decorations will be taken down after the worship service on January 4th. A Thrivent card and money from the Bill and Moneta McCleary memorial fund will be used to buy the supplies for the treat bags this year. It was suggested to use possibly the Paxton or the Mahomet FFA greenhouses to purchase the poinsettias for the altar from this year. Melanie Niemann will pursue this. Left over soda from the farm sale that our church did not end up serving will be sold after church for the next few Sundays.

The meeting was adjourned followed by reciting the Lord's Prayer.



David Hasty.....12-05
 Debbie Martin 12-09
 Bella Ford12-14
 Alicia Haggin12-17
 Diana Zimmerman12-21
 Nathan Hooker12-25
 Deb Johnson12-28
 John Grussing12-31



Martha and Darwin Warsaw – 12-31-1966

Statistics

Date	Worship Service	Bible Class	Conf/ Sunday School
October 26	39	12	6
November 2	42	16	4
November 9	40	12	4
November 16	45	16	4
November 23	41	16	5
November 23	14	N/A	N/A

Trunk or Treat in Bellflower and Mahomet on October 30th and 31st was an opportunity to advertise our church in our communities. A treat bag was handed out that had a cross keychain and a religious bookmark. Several members handed out postcards with our church's information on them.

Pictured on right – Jerry Niemann (tin man), Annette Warsaw (Dorothy), and Brenda Hendricks (scare crow)



