

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Messenger

Strum, Wisconsin

Livestream available at immanuelstrum.org



Immanuel's Women of the ELCA



****The WELCA Christmas Dinner and Program is on **Wednesday, December 3rd at 11:00 am.** A sliced ham and cheesy hashbrown potato dinner will be served. **Everyone welcome; no reservations needed.** Serving groups 12, 1 & 2 (Chairpersons Maxine Ulberg, Betty Vold, and Joan Guenther) are serving. We start with the program upstairs and then go down for dinner at noon.

We welcome back as our guest speaker and musician Mary Segerstrom. Mary grew up on a farm near Gilmanton, Wisconsin. She is grateful from her Christian parents and the values they instilled in her. She attended Oak Grove Grade School, Gilmanton High School, and Stout State University. She is married to Neil and they recently celebrated their 50th Anniversary. She is retired after working 26 years as a Teachers Aide for Special Needs students at the Mondovi Public Elementary School.

Mary is a humorist, speaker and singer, who accompanies herself on her baritone ukulele. She is a normal person with an abnormal attitude and her greatest joy is to uplift and inspire others. The title of her program is "What is Christmas, Anyway?" She might strip?! or put clothes on, make you laugh, or make you cry; but she does it all in good taste, and always does it "to the Glory of God."

***The WELCA has their own storage room now. If you can't find your cake pan or bowl it could be there. Our room is located downstairs in the basement. Go all the way through the hall and go through the double doors; last room on the right.

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In this newsletter
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Pastor Terry

Message Bishop
Halom

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Legacy Update

Financial Report

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ADRC Senior Meals

Calendar of Events

Gifts & Memorials

Endowment Fund

Our WELCA Bible study will continue on Monday, December 8th at 1:30 pm; no business meeting. **Potluck Christmas baking** if you have some. If not, don't worry. Come anyway there is always plenty. We are on Lesson 12 "Don't Give Up!" The book Living Above Worry and Stress has been chosen for the 2026 Bible study. We will meet on January 7th at 10:00 am. Some can clean the kitchen while other put our 2026 WELCA book together. Potluck with meeting and Bible study to follow.

The next Triennial Gathering is in Des Moines, IA, July 16-19th, 2026. The theme for the 2026 Triennial Gathering is "I am Worthy" based on Psalm 139:14: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." This statement serves as a reminder of God's promise to be with us, even in times of devastation and division. By repeating the phrase "I am Worthy" we can recognize the Holy Spirit's ongoing work in our lives. Learn more about the 2026 WELCA Triennial Gathering at the website: <https://welcatg.org>. This website is updated regularly with information about speakers, workshops, hotels, and more! Plus they are looking for sponsors, vendors and exhibitors.

We are still looking for one or two ladies to step forward and help next year. We are currently two officers short for 2026. We are looking for a President, Vice-president, or Co-chairpersons. Please prayerfully consider accepting a position on your WELCA team. Please remember your WELCA plays an active role in the life of our church. Our serving groups provide food and service for funerals and special events. our fundraiser, the Apple Pie Project, helps support many missions and projects in our church. So please consider joining our small group of dedicated members and officers of our WELCA. Come to one of our monthly meetings or special events to see what we are up to! You don't have to become an officer to join us at our meetings. All women of Immanuel are welcome to attend.

GIFTS & MEMORIALS

No memorials were given during the month of November.

Coffee Hour Hosts Needed!

Available opportunities to serve in December: Sunday, December 7, 21, and 28. If you would like to host a coffee hour, but are unsure of what to do, guidelines and suggestions are available in the office. Signup sheets are located on the table in the main entrance by the bulletin board.



STRUM AREA FOOD PANTRY

Saturday, December 13: 9 AM - 11 AM
Wednesday, December 17: 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Behold, the
virgin shall
conceive
and bear a
son,

and they
shall call
his name...

Immanuel or Emmanuel

Did you know that once upon a time, almost 70 years ago now, the West Beef River Lutheran Church and St. Paul's Lutheran Church, both of Strum, decided that the two should reunite and become one church again? They decided to come up with a new name for their newly re-formed Church. It was a name that would express their understanding of what God was willing to do for His people. While I imagine that the process of choosing that new name went on longer than most thought it needed to but once a name was agreed upon they were left with just one minor detail...how to spell their new name - Immanuel or Emmanuel?

I can't tell from reading accounts of the meetings held around that time if there were lengthy discussions over whether the biblical word that summarizes "God with us" is properly spelled beginning with an "I" or an "E". But I can tell you that, biblically speaking, it is sort of a loaded question. If you had voted for the new name to begin with an "I" you would have been tipping your hat, so to speak, to the Old Testament prophet Isaiah and the language most familiar to him - Hebrew. On the other hand, if you had cast your ballot for the new name to begin with an "E" you maybe had noticed that the gospel writer Matthew, most familiar with the Greek language, spells his name for Jesus coming to be with us, beginning with an "E".

If there were any in attendance those 70 or so years ago who piped up and said, "What difference does it really make how we spell our new name?" I would have sided with them because both Isaiah's and Matthew's spelling articulate the exact same verse and promise: that in the birth of Jesus Christ God has broken in to our world to forever be connected to His people in a very tangible way.

While it can be an interesting etymological exercise to trace the way that two different languages develop the spelling and meaning of the same word. That is certainly not what defines Christmas. Christmas is defined by God, being fully divine, coming to us in the incarnate, fully human person Jesus Christ. May God's people of Immanuel Lutheran join together in giving thanks and celebrating "God with us" this Christmas season.

Peace and Joy,
Pastor Terry Lorenz

BISHOP HALOM'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE: WHEN GOD SHOWS UP



As we approach the season of Christmas that so many of us adore, I'd like to address a few churchy words that theologians like to use and sound impressive when using them. The first word is *incarnation* and the second is *Emmanuel*.

If your church uses the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), you will again hear the passage from the first chapter of John on Christmas Day. The passage famously concludes in verse 14 with the words, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us..." This verse speaks directly to the concept of

incarnation. In other words, it speaks to a God who literally takes on human flesh and enters this world in the form of baby Jesus. It's in stark contrast to what some believe and experience - a God who exists far away, only to look down on us from God's heavenly throne. Instead, the incarnate God speaks to a God who is willing to take on the human experience with all the joys and sorrows that come with it. One can readily see that Jesus did indeed make his way through the human experience. He felt joy. He felt pain. His eyes teared up. And even if I can't recall a story when he laughed, I gotta believe that he really did!

Another passage found in the Christmas season comes from the gospel of Matthew, which references Isaiah 7:14: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, 'God is with us.'" One of the most important lessons I ever learned in seminary was in a pastoral care class. I had hoped to learn what to say, especially to someone hurting or grieving. What I learned was much more important. Instead of learning what to say, I was taught to show up - to be present. As time passes, few will remember what I say, but will remember that I was there. That's precisely why the name *Emmanuel* means so much to me. It's a constant reminder that God is always with us. Consider the final words in the gospel of Matthew: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20b) Presence matters because God embodies it and teaches it.

Christmas is known for its gift giving nature. We share gifts with one another to reveal our love for them. This year, I hope that regardless of the quantity or quality of the wrapped presents that lay under the tree, you will recognize the gift of presence. Not only the presence of your loved ones, but particularly the presence of God. So many of you will grieve as you experience the lack of presence from a loved one due to death or distance. My heart grieves with you. My hope lies in a God who provides and will gift you all with someone who will be present with you in some way at some time. If nothing else, remember God's presence as you receive the body and blood of Christ in the worship services that you attend, for that's yet another way in which God shows up.

Fellow disciples, Merry Christmas to you all and may the presence of God incarnate, Emmanuel, embrace you in such a way that brings warmth to your heart!

Bishop Martin

STRUM SENIOR DINING AT IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:30 AM; Catered by Sweet Temptations.

Reservations are required by 9 AM the Monday prior by calling 715-695-3511.

The **suggested donation is \$5.00 per meal**, which is given at the meal site.

The Senior Dining program relies on contributions from our customers so that we can serve more meals. You're welcome but not obligated to contribute.

DECEMBER 2025

Salad Option: Salmon Salad

(Baked Salmon filet with lemon and dill on a bed of romaine lettuce, cucumbers, red onion, grape tomatoes, feta cheese, and black olives)

Tuesday, December 2: BBQ on a bun, Cheesy Hashbrown, Chips, Pickle, Dessert

Thursday, December 4: Chicken Veggie Soup, ½ Turkey Wrap, Dessert

Tuesday, December 9: Scalloped Potatoes & Ham, Veggies, Dessert

Thursday, December 11: Chicken Taco Salad, Dessert

Tuesday, December 16: Pretzel Crusted Salmon or Chicken, Green Beans, Rice Pilaf, Dessert

Thursday, December 18: Chili, ½ Chef Salad, Fruit, Dessert

Tuesday, December 23: Meatballs, Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy, Veggies, Dessert

Thursday, December 25: NO MEAL – MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Tuesday, December 30: Stuffed Italian Chicken, Brussels Sprouts, Dessert

- Follow us on Facebook! @ADRCofTrempealeauCounty
- Senior Dining menus may be found on our website:
www.co.trempealeau.wi.us/adrc

*Menu items are subject to change due to item availability and unexpected shortages or shipment delays.

UPGRADING OUR MUSICAL WORSHIP LEGACY

Over 60 years old, the organ console is in dire need of a major overhaul. Levsen Organ Company submitted a bid to rebuild it and also add a record/play feature.

With a bid just under \$91,000, the congregation voted to have the console rebuilt. Scheduled to start after Easter 2026, we have one year to raise the money.

This requires an aggressive commitment from the congregation. Please prayerfully consider how the pipe organ enhances worship and consider a donation to the Organ Refurbishment Fund. Immanuel is also equipped to accept IRA distributions and corporate stocks and securities; contact Tom Wagener or Karin Back for more information.



Goal (Easter 2026): \$90,867
Amount Raised: \$71,729.20 (78.9%)
Amount Remaining: \$19,137.80



To keep an eye on how we are progressing toward our goal, check the Organ Fund meter in the main entrance of the church created by Kent and Karen Nelson.

General Fund Contributions	Total	Annual Budget Avg/Mo	Over/(Under) Monthly Budget	Annual Budget	Budget Remaining
Contributions	9,964.00	10,416.67	(452.67)	125,000.00	30,318.32
Electronic Contributions	2,382.53	2,508.33	(125.80)	30,100.00	5,051.22
Memorials & Other*	479.52	1,550.00	(1,070.48)	18,600.00	10,995.86
Total Contributions	12,826.05	14,475.00	(1,648.95)	173,700.00	46,365.40

General Fund Expenses	Total	Annual Budget Avg/Mo	Over/(Under) Monthly Budget	Annual Budget	Budget Remaining
Building & Property	85.35	1,250.00	(1,164.65)	15,000.00	5,608.09
General	129.10	75.00	54.10	900.00	(34.10)
Ministry	269.92	500.00	(230.08)	6,000.00	(435.35)
Office	67.99	283.33	(215.34)	3,400.00	1,076.19
Pastor	6,747.21	6,340.49	406.72	76,085.92	12,440.46
Payroll	4,198.07	4,757.20	(559.13)	57,086.44	14,393.37
Utilities	1,091.44	1,216.67	(125.23)	14,600.00	3,346.27
Total Expenses	12,589.08	14,422.70	(1,833.62)	173,072.36	36,394.93

Net Contributions **236.97**

	Account	Beginning Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Ending Balance
	CD-Roof	84,524.42	-	-	84,524.42
	Checking Account	19,872.56	17,664.05	15,330.42	22,206.19
Money Market Accounts	Building	5,103.91	-	25.47	5,078.44
	General	44,973.46	1,456.54	4,856.75	41,573.25
	General - Housing Allowance	55.19	-	-	55.19
	Benevolences	2,863.45	-	-	2,863.45
	CBELC	22,786.84	-	-	22,786.84
	Daughters of the King	4,391.10	-	-	4,391.10
	Fellowship	484.79	18.00	-	502.79
	Library	251.60	-	-	251.60
	Local Missions	209.79	-	-	209.79
	Music	2,006.38	-	-	2,006.38
	Organ Fund - Refurbishment	9,335.00	3,522.00	-	12,857.00
	Parsonage - General	27,852.88	550.00	-	28,402.88
	Parsonage - Property Tax	5,637.83	250.00	-	5,887.83
	Social Concerns	1,102.07	-	-	1,102.07
	Strum Area Food Pantry	10,253.50	530.00	999.27	9,784.23
	Sunday School	859.27	4.75	59.63	804.39
	Youth - General	7,192.49	-	-	7,192.49
	Youth - Luther Park	1,190.00	-	-	1,190.00
	Prepaid Pastoral Expenses	7,069.28	6,307.85	6,216.86	7,160.27
	Prepaid Postage	19.50	78.00	53.04	44.46
	Total Assets	258,035.31	30,381.19	27,541.44	260,875.06

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Pastor's Day Off	11:30 AM Senior Meals	3:45 - 4:45 PM Confirmation	11:30 AM Senior Meals		9 AM - 11 AM Breakfast with Santa
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:30 AM Worship/Communion 9:30 AM Coffee Hour 9:45 AM Sunday School	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study 1:30 PM WELCA Bible Study Pastor's Day Off	11:30 AM Senior Meals	3:45 - 4:45 PM Confirmation	11:30 AM Senior Meals 1 - 4 PM Quilting		9 AM - 11 AM  Strum Food Pantry
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:30 AM Sunday School Christmas Program 9:30 AM Coffee Hour 9:45 AM Sunday School	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Pastor's Day Off	11:30 AM Senior Meals	3:45 - 4:45 PM Confirmation 4:30-6:30 PM  Strum Food Pantry	11:30 AM Senior Meals		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Coffee Hour No Sunday School	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Pastor's Day Off	11:30 AM Senior Meals	5:00 PM Christmas Eve Service OFFICE CLOSED	8:30 AM Christmas Day Service OFFICE CLOSED		
28	29	30	31			
8:30 AM Worship 9:30 AM Coffee Hour No Sunday School	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Pastor's Day Off	11:30 AM Senior Meals	OFFICE CLOSED	OFFICE CLOSED		

2025 Christmas Season Schedule

3**DECEMBER****WELCA Christmas Dinner & Program**

11:00 AM Program

12:00 PM Dinner: Ham & Cheesy Potatoes

Speaker: Mary Segerstrom

6**DECEMBER****Breakfast with Santa**

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

14**DECEMBER****Sunday School Christmas Program**

8:30 AM

21**DECEMBER****Living Nativity**

5:00 PM & 6:30 PM

Elk Creek Lutheran Church
W16316 County Road OO; Osseo, WI**24****DECEMBER****Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

5:00 PM

25**DECEMBER****Christmas Day Service**

8:30 AM

28**DECEMBER****Lessons & Carols**

8:30 AM





POINSETTIA MEMORIALS

To purchase a poinsettia in honor of or in memory of a loved one, have your completed order form to the church office by December 14th. Please make checks payable to Robbe's. Plants may be taken home anytime following Christmas Day worship. Thank you!

_____ (number of plants) x \$9 = _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

From _____



CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

In lieu of purchasing a Poinsettia, a monetary donation may be made to the church in memory or honor of a loved one this Christmas season. Donations may be mailed to Immanuel Lutheran Church; PO Box 98; Strum, WI 54770 or dropped off at the church. All memorials and honorariums received by **December 18** will be published in the Christmas bulletin.

This gift of \$_____ is given to the _____ fund in:



memory of: _____

honor of: _____

from: _____

Children's Quiet Bags Available During Worship

Quiet bags, bags that are filled with activities to help occupy children's time and attention if they've lost interest in the service, are available in the south and north entryways. Our thanks to Valerie Lorenz for tending to the quiet bags and refilling them with fun surprises every so often. If you have suggestions on what else would be helpful for our children in worship, please let us know.

Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, December 6; 9 AM - 11 AM. Pancakes and Sausage: Adults \$5; Kids 12 and under FREE. Bring your camera and take a picture with Santa. Meal service is downstairs in the Immanuel Lutheran Fellowship Hall. Handicap accessible entry and lift available. Sponsored by the Strum Business Association.

Wreaths Across America

The Strum and Hale Township is invited to the Wreaths Across America Ceremony and Wreath Laying event on Saturday, December 13. The ceremony will begin at 10 AM at the Strum Immanuel Lutheran Church. Placement of wreaths will follow starting with St. Paul's Cemetery. Seeking volunteers to help with laying wreaths for our veterans that have no one to place a wreath on their headstone. Alton Johnson VFW Post 6550.

Thankoffering

Thank you for supporting the Thankoffering. \$492 was received on Sunday, November 23. If anyone would still like to support the Thankoffering, please leave your donation in the offering plate or mail it to me as I will forward it at the end of December.

Thank you,
Jean Herman, WELCA Treasurer

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN ENDOWMENT FUND

Grant Applications Now Being Accepted

The mission of the Immanuel Lutheran Church Endowment Fund is to encourage Christian Stewardship and to enhance the outreach ministry of the congregation. Requests are invited in November and December of each year and awards are made at the February annual congregational meeting. A minimum of five percent of the fund's value is given out in four categories.

- Scholarships to members of the congregation attending a Lutheran college or seminary
- Local social service agencies administering to the needs of people in the community
- ELCA education and outdoor ministries
- ELCA and Northwest WI Synod sponsored outreach programs and partner ministries

Grant applications made be found on our website at immanuelstrum.org/endowment-fund-church-grants or at the main entrance (Narthex) of the church. **Application deadline is December 31.**

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND

Scholarship/Grant Application

Funds may be requested for the purpose of: attending a post-high school Lutheran educational program, church related camp or leadership conference, training enabling members of the congregation to grow in their faith and service to God's people, church youth outreach programs outside the current operating budget, social service agencies/institutions/ programs designed for people in our community who are in spiritual or economic need, ELCA educational institutions and ministries, Synod ministry requests, World Hunger, World Mission, Mission outreach and other partnership ministries through the ELCA.

Recipient Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Funds Requested: \$ _____

Requested by: _____

To Be Used For:

Check Made Payable To: _____

Application Deadline: **December 31, 2025**

Return in a sealed envelope marked "Endowment Fund" to:

Immanuel Lutheran Church
PO Box 98
Strum, WI 54770

Thank you letter may be addressed to Endowment Fund, Immanuel Lutheran Church, PO Box 98, Strum, WI 54770

All applications subject to the Bylaws of the Immanuel Lutheran Church Endowment Fund.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

This is Christ's Church.

There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person — questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

<http://www.elca.org/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor

Terry Lorenz

Cell: 715-533-8121

email: pastorterrylorenz@tcc.coop

Administrator

Michelle Jacobson

Office: 715-695-3511

email: office@immanuelstrum.org

Office Hours

Sunday: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Monday: 9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Tuesday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Wednesday: 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Thursday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Church Council

Kris Husby, President

Bob Schlink, Vice-president

Gloria Wagener, Treasurer

John Eide, Secretary

Dean Anderson, Member-at-large

Tyler Back, Member-at-large

Need Offering Envelopes?

Please contact Michelle
in the office.

715-695-3511 or

office@immanuelstrum.org

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STRUM, WI

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109 Elm Street
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Strum, WI 54770