

Rev. Kevin A. Karner
Pastor

Deborah Krueger
School Principal

Messenger

December 2024

Vol. 24 No. 11

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL, BRISTOL, CONNECTICUT



OUR MISSION

The people of Immanuel Lutheran Church are living proof of the grace of God through salvation in Jesus Christ. Empowered by Christ, our mission is to reach out in love to those who have not yet responded to the Gospel that all may be united in Christ.

School Mission

The Mission of Immanuel Lutheran School is to provide a loving atmosphere of academic excellence for children while developing in them and their families a lasting relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Immanuel Lutheran
Church and School**
154 Meadow Street
Bristol, CT 06010

860-583-5649

www.ilcs.org



Immanuel Lutheran Church & School

154 Meadow Street, Bristol, CT 06010 Church: 860-583-5649 School: 860-583-5631 www.ilcs.org

Another year is coming to a close and I would like to reflect on the many positive happenings at Immanuel Lutheran Church & School during 2024. We have been so Blessed by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

As Christians around the world are being attacked and criticized for their beliefs, we must all cling to our faith and trust that the Lord is with us and as scripture says *"the gates of hell shall not prevail against my Church"*.

We as a church body and "communion of saints" must always remember that *"if God is for us who can be against us!"* As we continue our journey in faith, we must always take time to thank HIM for the Blessings HE has bestowed upon us as a congregation! We are always apprehensive about passing a budget with a large deficit, but the Lord always seems to help us and this year we again ended our fiscal year with a surplus, not a deficit!

We are grateful to our Pastor who faithfully leads us in worship and Bible study and is true to the teaching of LCMS and the infallible word of the Bible!

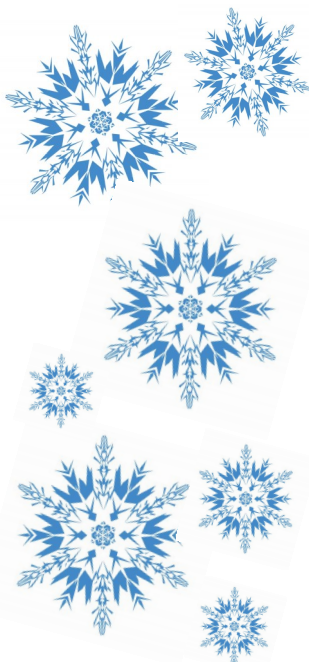
Our school continues to grow and teach the children about Jesus and his gift of salvation. Our school is a not a "money maker" but a mission of bringing Christ to children who desperately need to know HIM and to trust him to guide them throughout life. We are again blessed with having Debbie Krueger as our Principal who is leading and guiding our staff and students.

I want to wish all of you a Blessed Christmas.

In HIS Service

Howard T. Schmelder

Congregational President



The Women of Immanuel will hold their annual Christmas potluck on Saturday, December 6 at noon in the OSB. Bring your favorite dish and a friend; desserts will be provided. All women are welcome. Mark your calendar to celebrate the Advent of the coming of our Lord with your sisters in Christ.





Messenger is published monthly by Immanuel Lutheran Church and School for its members and friends.

Immanuel is a member of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Ed & Dee Krampitz
Newsletter Editors

Deadline for submissions is the 25th of the month.

**SUNDAY
DIVINE SERVICES**

8:00 a.m.

Holy Communion on the 1st, 3rd, & 5th Sunday of the month.
— (Live Streaming) —

~ ~ ~

10:45 a.m.

Holy Communion on the 2nd, 4th, & 5th Sunday of the month.
~ ~ ~

ADULT BIBLE STUDY

9:30 a.m.

— (Live Streaming) —



**WHEELCHAIR
ACCESSIBLE**

Worship Services are broadcast each Sunday at 1:00 p.m. on

**WNTY Radio
AM 990**

AND

FM 96.1

and online at KoolOldiesRadio.net

From the Pastor's Desk

According to Plan?

Luke 2:6-7 – *And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 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.*

How distressed Joseph must have been! He couldn't get a decent place for his wife to lie down, even though she was plainly about to give birth. There was no room in the inn. Whatever relatives they might have had in Bethlehem couldn't give them a bed. By this point, Mary no doubt wanted nothing but a place to lie down – any place, so long as it was horizontal; but her husband wanted better for his wife and her baby.

I wonder what Joseph thought of God's planning at that moment. It surely didn't resemble the kind of planning Joseph wanted! Was he angry? Frightened? Worried? We don't know.

But in God's eyes, everything was going according to plan. Jesus was about to be born in the city of David, in Bethlehem, as God had promised so many years ago: "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me One who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days" (Micah 5:2).

God came into our world as a human baby between the thighs of a woman in temporary housing. We don't even know if Joseph managed to find a midwife to help. Instead

of a cedar cradle, Jesus had a manger to sleep in. Instead of silk and cloth of gold, Jesus was wrapped in homely swaddling clothes. This is the birth God planned for Himself as He set in motion His great plan – the plan to redeem us all from the power of death and the devil.

Like Joseph, we too are often distressed when our plans aren't working out – especially when we see our loved ones suffer as a result. But we can take comfort in knowing that God cares for them as He cares for us, and He is working out His plans to save us all – through Jesus, our Savior.

THE PRAYER: Lord, when our plans go wrong, help us to rest in You, trusting that You will see us through. Amen.

Pastor Karner

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Advent: The Season

Join us for midweek Advent worship on the Wednesdays of December at 10:45 am (followed by a luncheon) and 7:00 pm for this special time of reflection. Our theme is based on the hymn, "The Night Will Soon Be Ending." The schedule includes:

December 4: The Light of Creation

December 11: The Light of the World in the Manger

December 18: The Light that Has No End
Take the time to "slow down" and spiritually "breathe." You'll be glad you did!



Oh Holy Night

Christmas Services and New Year's Eve

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 24, 7 pm & 11 pm (HC)

Christmas Day Service

Wednesday, December 25, 9 am (HC)

New Year's Eve Service

Tuesday, December 31, 7 pm (HC)

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it. — 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ **Church News** ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Young at Heart

Wishing everyone a blessed Advent and Christmas season in 2024!! Hope you are planning to join us on Thursday, December 5 at 11:30 at the Middle Street Max IV Restaurant for our Christmas Lunch Party. We needed your reservation and check last month, but want to let you know that we can make slight changes by calling Carol M. at 860-582-9608 by Dec. 3. We don't want you to miss out on the singing, fellowship, door prizes and buffet meal, as we will not hold any senior lunches until spring 2025.

Last month about 34 of us enjoyed celebrating the 30 years of our Senior Lunches with a special cake and of course all the delicious homemade soups and sandwiches you made.

The two physical therapists from nearby Select Physical Therapy came and demonstrated all the concerns we can have with our aching backs. Handouts were distributed and personal questions were answered after the program.

Remember, Advent midweek church services begin on Dec. 4 - Wednesdays at 10:45 am and 7 pm.

Be sure to greet one another in church on Sundays. Share your Christmas Joy!!



Lorraine Sonstrom and Pastor Karner



Warm a Child with Winter Coats
 Thank you to everyone who donated coats.
 We collected 79 warm coats.
 Thank you,
 Christy Hislop



~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Church News ~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Proverbs 31 Women's Bible Study Tuesday, December 10



Our next Bible study will be with **Holiday Cheer** at 85 East Road (Rhoda's home). Please bring a wrapped gift to exchange. Please bring a snack to share. **Gift exchange and snacks are at 5 pm. and Bible Study is at 7 pm.**

Brenda Buonafede

Christmas Tree Lighting and Carol Sing

Celebrate the joy of the Christmas season at Immanuel's annual Outdoor Christmas Tree Lighting and Carol Sing on Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 6:30 PM, right in front of the church on Meadow Street.

Come experience the true spirit of Christmas as we light the outdoor tree, sing our most beloved Christmas carols, gather around cozy fires (weather permitting, and if approved by the fire marshal), and enjoy hot cocoa and freshly baked cookies. Our beautiful church sanctuary and lobby will be fully decorated for the holidays. If you get chilly, feel free to go indoors and continue enjoying this cheerful evening with others. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a church and community to share in the warmth and joy of the season.

So, spread the word...bring your family, friends, and neighbors—let's celebrate the true Spirit of Christmas! If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll move indoors to the Sanctuary.

Special Note: If you are one of our older members or are not comfortable driving at night but would like to attend this event, please reach out to Rhoda Lange at (860) 543-5992 by December 8th, and we will try to coordinate a ride for you with one of our other members.

Please join us weekly at the Parish Center.



CARDS Every Monday at 1:00 pm. Open to all adults. Please join us for an afternoon of laughs.

Walking every Tuesday at 9:00 weather permitting, and Walk and Talk at 9:30 am. All are welcomed. We are a fun group – we even laugh! Snacks and coffee provided. Please join us, we'd love to see you.

**LUNCH
at
BARC**

Join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month,
December 10,
at BARC - 12:30 pm.
Join us and bring a friend.

Women's Bible Study

Tuesday, December 3 and 17 at noon. Bring a lunch, and join us for a Bible Study in the Parish Center.



If anyone in the church would like a visit from the Parish Nurse, please contact me. If someone is being admitted to the hospital or having surgery, please let me know.

Merry Christmas and God's blessings for a happy, healthy New Year.

Roberta Kuhr RN BSN FCN
860-621-0230

You're invited to join us for a Holiday

Community Carol Sing

ALL ARE WELCOME!

DATE: Saturday, Dec 14th

TIME: 6:30 PM

PLACE: Immanuel Lutheran Church & School

(Outside on the corner of West & Meadow Streets, across from Boys & Girls Club)

Christmas Tree Lighting
Sing your favorite Christmas Carols
Outdoor Fires & Luminaries
Refreshments & Warm Beverages

Immanuel Lutheran Church & School
154 Meadow Street, Bristol, CT 06010
1860) 583-3649 | www.ILCS.org

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Digital Photography Club

Current Events – 2 PAGES!

WORK FINALLY GETS OFF THE GROUND

Repairs to the steeple continue. Preliminary work in March and early April stopped water leakages into the building and under bricks. Brickwork was done to replace missing bricks, repaired loose bricks, and secured the steeple enough to make the steeple “safe.” More work was scheduled for the summer to fully resolve steeple issues. *Phase 1* of that effort began in mid-October and continues as of this writing. The photographs below illustrate some of the *Phase 1* work. Unfortunately for the viewer but fortunate for the photographer, the photos had to be taken from the ground.



Securing the Aluminum Steeple with heavy stainless steel bolts.

Most work was done inside.



Finishing the Brickwork.

Join us! Our next meeting is Tuesday, December 3rd, at 7:00pm in the Parish Center.

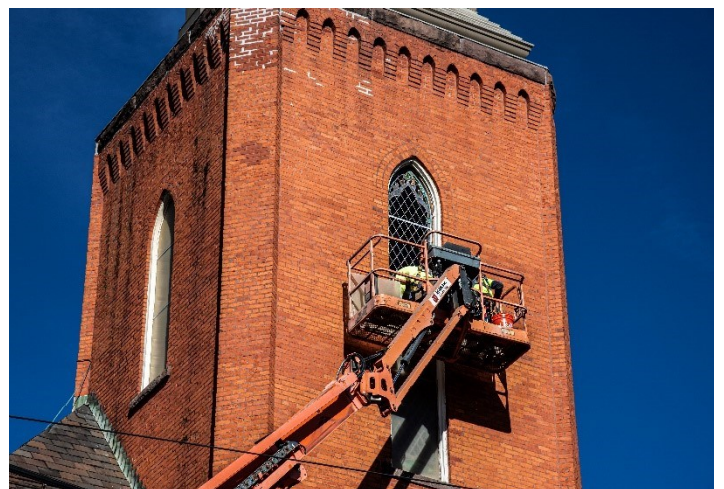
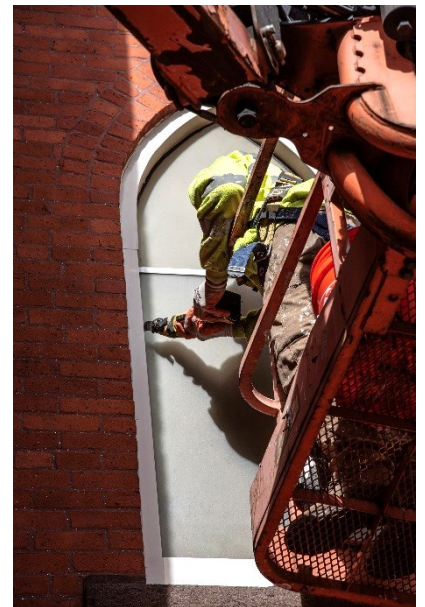
The Immanuel Lutheran Church Digital Photography Club



Securing the Aluminum plates encasing the spire. Some have been replaced.



Power-Chiseling the fogged plexiglass panels from the nine windows in the front of the church. To be replaced with clear Lexan panels



Steeple Progress Update - from the Board of Trustees

Aluminum steeple

The shell has been inspected, 2 panels were replaced, any loose fittings were replaced. On the inside, the aluminum panels that were installed at some time to keep out water were reattached. A metal flashing has been installed around the exterior perimeter base to keep out water. He feels that the aluminum steeple is now waterproof. Only rainfall will tell for certain.

The new drain has not been installed and the structure has not been anchored securely yet. The new coating of the concrete cap has not occurred. These items are to be completed soon.

Mortar/bricks

Brick samples have been sent for analysis.

Engineer has done an aerial inspection. Waiting on report

Slate roof

When the lift is being moved, a complete visual inspection will be performed.

Windows

Upon removing the old covers, there are areas of concern on several frames that need attention. Specifically rotten wood where water from condensation was trapped and over time the wood has rotted. His proposal is to replace the rotted wood and when installing new lexan, they will leave a weep hole at the base of each window, They will also paint the newly exposed old window frames so that they will conform to the color of the rest of the trim on the church. Dave Poole provided the color.

The church has been given the statement for \$35,725.00. The 1/2 of the total anticipated cost of phase 1.

Support the Steeple Fund: A Beacon of Our Faith and Heritage

Dear Members, Alumni & Friends,

For generations, the steeple of Immanuel Lutheran Church has been a symbol of faith and hope, standing tall as a reminder of God's presence in our lives and in our community. It has inspired countless hearts, welcomed worshippers near and far, and connected us to the rich history of our congregation and school.

Now, this cherished part of our church needs your help. Years of weather and time have taken their toll, and significant repairs are needed to ensure the steeple remains strong for future generations. To meet this challenge, we have formed a Steeple Committee and established a new Steeple Fund, dedicated to this important restoration project.

We ask you to consider joining us in preserving this beautiful symbol of our faith. Every contribution, no matter the size, will bring us closer to our goal of \$300,000. Together, we can ensure that the steeple continues to inspire all who worship here and all who see it as a beacon of hope in our community.

How to Donate:

By Mail:

Immanuel Lutheran Church – Steeple Fund
154 Meadow Street
Bristol, CT 06010

Online: <https://members.myeoffering.com>

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to the church office at (860) 583-5649. With your support, we can uphold the legacy of Immanuel Lutheran Church and keep the steeple standing strong as a testament to our shared faith and commitment. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and generosity.

– Howard Schmelder,
Chairman of The Steeple Committee

Advent: The Season

The ending of another church year leads us to the beginning of a new year – and the *Season of Advent*. In spiritual preparation for the coming of the Christ Child and His Holy Nativity, Immanuel Lutheran Church will gather for midweek services every Wednesday in December at 10:45am and 7:00pm. Our theme is based on the hymn, “**The Night Will Soon Be Ending**” (Lutheran Service Book, # 337).

The schedule includes:

Wednesday, December 4 – “**The Light of Creation**”

Wednesday, December 11 – “**The Light of the World in the Manger**”

Wednesday, December 18 – “**The Light that Has No End**”

Amid all the tinsel and glitter, the expectations and responsibilities, this is our opportunity to focus on the most important gift of all – JESUS! Make it a priority!

Thank you from The Koch family

I want to express my deepest gratitude for the kindness, prayers, love, and generosity you have all shown during this time of grief. From the cards, flowers, food, gifts, kind words, and beautiful funeral, each and every person has gone above and beyond to show love and support to our family. You have all helped to put our dear Vernon to rest with our Lord and Savior. His spirit and memory will live on in Immanuel Lutheran Church and School - it's members and students. I know his powerful impact will never be forgotten.

Whenever I walk into our church sanctuary, I will forever hear the music from Vernon's fingers so reverently flying across the organ keys. Though the organ may never sound or feel the same without his presence, I know he will always be present as the music echos through our beautiful church. Immanuel Lutheran was one of Vernon's favorite places to be and he considered you all to be a part of his family.

Vernon believed firmly in the power and love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and his presence in our family, our church and school communities, and in our world. He always saw the good in everyone and led

those in his life by his faithful example of kindness, love, patience, and it never ending generosity. He truly lived his life as a child of God and continues to encourage all of us to do the same. May his spirit live on in us all, shown by our choice to live a life and kindness, love, faithfulness, and generosity to all we passed by in this life.

This quote from William Penn is something that will continue to remind me of how Vernon lived his life.

"I expect to pass through this life, but once. If, therefore, there is any kindness I can show or any good I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again." William Penn

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for all you have done and continue to do to support our family.

May God bless you all, always.

With love and sincerity,
Lois

Gone Too Soon-Grandpa's Poem

I'll never forget that Monday when I got the news,
That we lost a precious angel. You were taken far too soon.
My world was shattered, my heart was broken,
And sadly, the sun no longer looked as golden.

That day was a day I had dreaded for years,
And I had no ability to hold back my tears.
Although my sadness will forever be,
I find comfort knowing you now are free.

Free of pain, free of suffering,
Free of earthly trials and tribulations,
No more wounds, no more fear,
No more feelings of frustration.

You lived a life of faithfulness, of compassion, and of love,
Now your ever gracious spirit can watch us from above.
The memories I have of you are ones I'll always hold.
And to my son these memories will never go untold.

They're of laughter and of music, of story books and the ocean,
They're of big bear hugs, of holidays, and a heart of true devotion.
Your spirit is one of a teacher, of genuineness and nobility,
It is one of love and kindness, of patience and humility.

You shared your love of literature with your students and with me.
You taught us all to love "To Kill a Mockingbird" by the famous Harper Lee.
I loved to watch your fingers fly reverently across the organ keys,
To me it was your way of prayer that put our hearts at ease.

There were days in college I felt so alone and that no one else believed in me,
But you were always there as my support saying there was nothing I couldn't be.
In my darkest days, when failure was lurking and my grades were at their
worst,

You and Gram reminded me I was born to be a nurse.

Now here I stand at your funeral, a wife, a nurse, a mother,
Missing you, my precious gramps, a pain unlike any other.
Please dear gramps watch over me, Gramsie, my son and husband too.
Please just know no matter what, I'll never stop loving you.

Autumn Chretien
September 2024

Thank you to everyone involved with Vernon's funeral and reception for helping make it a reflection of what Dad gave to his church, school, community, and family. Such an overwhelming show of support from everyone truly showed how many lives my Dad touched.

David

Memories of dad will forever remain part of my family's life. Father, husband, mentor, grampa, musician, Boy Scout, teacher, principal, technologist, comedian, storyteller, preacher, healer, churchman, organist, pianist, bell ringer, singer, tenor, barbershopper, and photographer. Vernon had a way of living the Gospel message that touched many different people both inside and outside of the church. He loved the Lord and it showed as he lived a life filled with grace and beatitude.

Growing up, it was sometimes difficult to understand why we had to share Dad. There were many late nights and early mornings when he was engaged at the church, school or one of the other community organizations he was involved in. However, the many stories that were shared with Mom, David, and I during Dad's wake and funeral helped me understand just how many people he affected and that sharing him was a part of who he was. It was a time to mourn but also a time to celebrate a life that was lived for others.

St. Paul tells us that Love is patient. Love is kind. This definitely described Dad, though David and I certainly tested Love's patience at times. The end of that passage in first Corinthians offers a better view into who Dad was. "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." Dad had a love for the people around him that bore their troubles, believed in who they were, endured their trials, and offered hope to those he encountered.

Many of you shared with me times in your lives that were shaped by something Vern did or said. I want to offer our sincerest gratitude for the love that you have for Dad and our family. Know that he was shaped by his Lord and the community that came together to celebrate his life. The passage on his grave says it all, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21).

May the peace of Christ be with each of you.
Lois, David, and Peter

From the Principal's Desk

Dear Immanuel Lutheran Church Members and Friends,

The month of November has been eventful and it began with our annual veterans' day program on Nov. 8th. Our students did a great job singing and reading poems and essays to thank the veterans in attendance for their service. The middle school students also helped serve a light breakfast to the veterans who stayed after the program.

We were blessed with a visit from a Christian singer named Wendysue. She shared her music with our students during a chapel service and she also spent some time singing and reading with our preschool students.

We were able to send \$500 of our chapel offering to the hurricane victims in the southeast through the LCMS disaster response ministry. Our students also collected food for our annual food drive, and our second grade class won a pizza party for bringing in the most food. The entire school was also rewarded with ice cream because everyone did such a great job!

We continue to be thankful for all that God is doing within our school, and we pray that he will guide and bless us as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,
Debbie Krueger



Immanuel Lutheran School children say thank you to our Veterans on Friday, November 8th

~ Veterans Day photos by Marilyn Stone ~

Food Drive



HEARTFELT THANK YOU

The Board of Evangelism and Board of Stewardship would like to give a heartfelt thank you to everyone who donated to our Thanksgiving Food Drive.

In addition to dispersing donations to area food pantries, we partnered with the Bristol Hospital Cancer Care Center. We were able to supply turkeys and fixings to 8 patients and their families that are actively going through cancer treatments. These 8 families would have gone

without a Thanksgiving meal. The Cancer Care Center and the 8 families were incredibly grateful for our support.

An additional thank you goes out to our students and teachers! They collected an incredible amount of food. Miss Guerrero's 2nd grade class collected the most and had a pizza party to celebrate! We also rewarded the whole school with an ice cream treat, to show our appreciation for their hard work!



Announcement: Offering Envelopes Update

It's that time of year again to check in and ensure we're meeting the needs of our members and how they like to make their weekly offerings, memorials, and other gifts.

If you currently receive physical offering envelopes but don't use them because you give online, or if you give online and would still like to receive envelopes, we'd love to hear from you!

Likewise, if you're a member who gives without envelopes and would like to request them for 2025, now is the perfect time to let us know.

Please let us know if:

- You no longer need to receive physical offering envelopes.
- You give online but would still like to receive offering envelopes.
- You would like to request offering envelopes for 2025

To update your preferences, contact the church office or email Dawn Milano directly at DMilano@ilcs.org before December 14th. Thank you for helping us serve you and steward our resources wisely!

WINTER ICE MELT AVAILABLE

In an effort to defray the cost of annual snow & ice removal, the Board of Trustees has Winter Ice Melt available. The ice melt is the Kissner's Co., Landscaper's Choice Ice Melt with CMA (Calcium Magnesium Acetate). It is easier on the concrete than traditional rock salt. This ice melt is environmentally friendly and pet safe. Board members have volunteered to deliver to church member homes if needed. Anyone can order, so tell your friends & neighbors. The order form should be returned to the Church office.



Cut & Return to Church Office

Name: _____ **I need delivery** _____

Address: _____ **Phone:** _____

_____ 50 lb. bag/s @ \$17.50 for personal use = \$ _____

_____ 50 lb. bag/s @ \$17.50 for church use = \$ _____

_____ 1 for me, 1 for church @ \$35.00 = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Checks should be made out to Immanuel Lutheran Church, with a notation regarding the Ice Melt sale. Call Bob Wollenberg with any questions, 860-584-0587 (hm) or 860-877-3031 (cell).

DECEMBER 2024 BIRTHDAYS

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Joy Mora	2 Peggy Campbell Ethan Debaise Walter Kuhr	3 Cameron Reed Luke Sonstroem	4 Lori Eschner Robert Helming	5 Donovan Jusino Hannah Krueger	6 Joy Grekula Elizabeth Wilde	7
8	9 Anthony Lopisi Erin Madigan-Scheidel Oskar Tolmoff	10 James Bishop James Bugryn Scott Dennis Glorie Romaniello	11 James Thaxter	12 Dean Buden III Beth Deloge Alison Eschner Diane Finger	13 Marion Schroeder	14 Nathaniel Tessman Bobby Triplett
15 Valya Rindfleisch Andrew Tonn	16 Luke Foley Stephanie Parenteau Jamie Simard	17	18 Kyleigh Boney Cole Krueger Carol Mogy Andrew Skinner	19 Marcia Lopisi	20 Hans Bayer Cheyenne Blaschke James Raspanti	21 Rebecca Croce Maria Santilli
22	23 Myrna Gamache Jason Krueger	24 Ingebor Harrington Caroline Scarpati	25 River Plaskett	26 Kristen Hill Maggie Moliengo Erika Santilli	27 Rosie Fernandez David Follo	28 Rev. Robert Beinke Brenda Buonafede Edwin Gillette
29 Alan Blank	30 Sheri Lejeune Jacob Stringer Madison Tessier Edward Young	31 Sal Buonafede Victoria Casa	Merry Christmas			





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ORGANIZATION
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PERMIT NO. 382

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
154 MEADOW STREET
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Messenger 