

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Happy New Year, Friends! While thinking about the New Year and all the plans and goals we set, I came across this little article to share with you...

In *Beyond Ourselves*, author Catherine Marshall tells about a problem she faced as a young person. She and her family lived in a very small town in West Virginia that had undergone severe financial struggles in the aftermath of the 1929 stock-market crash. The two railroad shops, which were the only industry in town, were nearly shut down. Even with the promise of a small work scholarship and the \$125 she had saved, Catherine was several hundred dollars short of what she needed to attend college.

One night her mother came into her room and found her sobbing. Her dreams of college seemed dashed. Her mother suggested that they bow together and ask for God's help. "Whenever we ask God for something that is God's will, God hears us," her mother said. "If God hears us, then God grants the request we have made. So you and I can rest on that promise."

Soon, Catherine's mother was offered a writing job working on the history of their county. She made enough money in this job to pay for Catherine's college expenses with a little to spare.

Do you have plans and goals for your life that seem impossible to achieve? Ask God to help. God will open doors of opportunity to you that you never imagined. God, you see, is always committed to your success.

As we enter another New Year, we do so knowing that God has our backs! Just like last year, it gives me tremendous comfort to remember that there is nowhere I will go during this year that God will not go with me and arrive before me. And that confidence allows me the opportunity to try new things without fear. Because I remember the words of Paul's letter to the Corinthians which reminds me..... "*No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him.*" (1 Corinthians 2:9)

Let's enter 2023 imagining a God that is laying out a wonderful banquet of opportunities and possibilities for all the people of Immanuel. What exciting ministry does God have planned for us this year? I'm excited to be with you on this journey.... called ministry!

Pastor Jack



INSIDE...

Youth/ Family News
Ministries News



Kidz Club!

On Sunday January 8th at the 10:00am service, Kidz Club starts back up with our new coordinator, Alex Beavers. Alex, will be using one of our Methodist Curriculum and each week will be filled with Bible Stories, crafts, games and songs.

Parents, bring those kids and let's give Alex a warm welcome to our Immanuel Church Community.



THIS AND THAT FROM PASTOR JACK.....

Here are some things to think about and maybe even mark your calendar to attend...

1. Our Coffee Hour ministry to doing great... thanks to all who sign up and help! The treats have been delicious (and nutritious), the coffee has been good, and the fellowship is out of this world! Thanks to all who serve in this important ministry.

2. Thanks for all your gifts, cards, delicious baked goods and gifts this past holiday season! Each of them brightened our days and reminded us yet again how blessed we are to be here in ministry with you all!

3. I am always amazed when I look at the church calendar for the early part of the year. This 2 month period of January and February begins with Epiphany and celebrating the Baby of Bethlehem and will end with the start of Lent! So much transformation during these 8 weeks!

4. If you're wondering about Lent 2023..... do some research and see which popular hymn is celebrating it's 250th birthday in 2023! It will be a huge part of Lenten worship this year!

5. Don't forget to wear your name tag each Sunday morning! Everyone appreciates hearing their own name and by wearing your name tag you make this much easier. If you need a nametag, please put a note in Pam's mailbox across from the office.

Thanks! Pastor Jack



RENEWAL LEAVE WRAP-UP

As many of you know, I was away from the parish for 8 weeks in October and November. During this time Becky and I were blessed to attend our niece's wedding in beautiful Banff, Canada and then spend almost 4 weeks on Oahu visiting with family and friends there. Here are some things I learned...

1. There might not be a more beautiful place on earth than the 2 places we visited! The Canadian Rockies are magnificent and having the chance to preside at my niece's wedding worship, in such a beautiful setting, was truly a gift from God!

2. Oahu ain't bad either!!! After almost a month of 87-degree sunshine, I have discovered living life in shorts and Hawaiian shirts is pretty good! We relaxed, I got to do a lot of reading and sightseeing and both Becky and I returned feeling refreshed and relaxed for the start of Advent and Christmas.

3. I relearned things about ministry I had forgotten. Things like the importance of music to a worshipping community, the need to continually try new things to engage more and different people, and the power of a simple pastoral contact were reinforced for me while we were away.

You'll hear and see more of what I learned in these first months of 2023, and I am so thankful to be a part of a church family that supported our need for some family time together! Thanks also to pastor Diane and Pastor Susan for their ministry while I traveled! ~Pastor Jack



Don't miss our **CHILI/CHOWDER COOK-OFF** on Sunday, January 8, after the 10:00 service, in the Fellowship Hall.

Bring a crockpot of your favorite chili or chowder, or just come to enjoy all the offerings and vote for your favorite.

PRIZES will be awarded for first, second, and third place.

Please sign up in the Narthex so we can set a place for you, and feel free to bring a friend to church, lunch and a fun time!

Questions? Contact Barb Merckel **page 2**

News From our Mission Team

Shelley Dawson Smith, Chairperson



Door Sprays

- Thanks to Dan Martini, owner of Syracuse Christmas Tree Farm in Syracuse for donating the greens.
- Thanks to Mike DeOrdio, Jerry Sabattis, Gary Merckel and Warren Robinson for cutting the greens.
- Thanks to Jerry Sabattis who helped set up the tables in the Fellowship Hall.
- Thanks to Denise Sabattis, Ed Owens and Mike DeOrdio who helped assemble the door sprays.
- Thanks to Joan Archambeau, Julie DeOrdio, Barb Merckel, Judy Owens, Ruth McConnellee, Janet Robinson, Denise Sabattis, Barb Blanchard, Angela Keida, Tamma Goldner, Pam Blocklin and Karen Piccioni who did an outstanding job decorating the sprays.
- Thanks to the people who purchased the door sprays.
- Through this cooperative effort, we made 41 door sprays and as everything is donated, we were able to contribute \$820 to the Mission Team for Disaster Recovery.



Angel Tree

We give thanks for the generosity of our church. We were able to bless so many children from Syracuse's Big Brother/Big Sister program as well as children in the Hillside Family of Agencies with Christmas gifts. The children from the Hillside list each received 2 gifts. The unwrapped gifts for BB/BS allowed each adult in the program to choose a special gift for his/her Little Brother or Sister. Thank you for participating in sharing the love of Christ with these special children.

Heifer Project

With your help, we were able to send \$785 to Heifer International. Heifer International which is a development organization working to end hunger and poverty around the world.



M2 DONATION

Betty Block who is a member of the Mission Team proposed helping students at Solvay High School by purchasing hoodies, underwear, socks and toiletries; it was unanimously approved so with \$750.00 Betty and I went shopping. We filled 24 gift bags, 12 each for boys and girls. For the boys we bought deodorant, razors, shaving gel, shampoo & bodywash, underpants, socks and hoodies. For the girls we bought deodorant, razors, shampoo & conditioner, body wash, nail polish, nail polish remover, cotton rounds, underpants, socks and hoodies. We also put a bag of candy in each gift bag. We surprised the school on 12/5/22 with a carload of gifts.

Thanks to the generous support of the congregation of M2 our church was able to bring joy to 24 students.



Shoe Ministry

Immanuel supports the shoe ministry that was started by "Ralph the Shoe Guy" owner of Discount Shoe Repair in downtown Syracuse. Ralph refurbishes the shoes which may involve some polish or replacing the laces or putting on new soles and he then gives the shoes to the Rescue Mission. Ralph started this ministry in 2010 with a donation of 65 pairs of shoes and it has grown to 34,007 pairs of shoes in 2022! Ralph donates his time and the supplies however he also accepts cash to help defray the cost of the supplies. Immanuel donated 130 pairs of shoes in 2022. Let's continue to help Ralph and the Rescue Mission! The donation box is in the Narthex under the coat hangers. Any questions ask Shelley Dawson Smith 315- 727-0671.



Mitten Tree

On behalf of the Mission Team, a heartfelt thank you is extended to everyone who donated to this project. Every branch on our tree was covered with socks, mittens, hats, scarves and gloves. And under the tree were gently used boots and coats.

The toddler size items were given to New Hope Family Services on James St. The smaller size children's items were given to East Hill Elementary School in Camillus. The larger size children's items were given to Solvay High School and Solvay Geddes Youth Center.

The children of our community will be warmer this winter because of your generosity. Our goal was 100 items and this year 214 items were donated!



OUTSIDE LIVE NATIVITY

On December 17th the church's yard was transported back to the birth of our Savior. There was a stable, angels, shepherds, wonderful music and of course real animals! It was a wonderful and magical evening.

A heartfelt and sincere thank you is extended to the following people who helped tell the Christmas story and made it so special:

- Mary: **Adie K.**
- Joseph: **Jack K.**
- Angel Gabriel: **Elodie A.**
- Shepherds: **Mason A., Asa K. & Brayden S.**
- Angels: **Avery A., Kaylee B., Allie G., Harper K., Charlotte K. & Kayla S.**
- Kings: **Reese B., Aiden G. & Jillian K.**
- Narrator: **Pastor Jack**
- Vocalists: **Sammi B. & Sophia P.**
- Rt 80 Stables: **Ollie the donkey, Razzle the mini horse & 2 adorable mini goats.**
- Tori Stopen: **Roosters Sir Fluff-a-Lot & Caffeine**

An event like this needs help from a number of behind-the-scenes people and my thanks to each and every one:

- Dave Stanton:** Bell Tower Ringer
- Sam Paventi:** Refreshments
- Denise Sabattis:** Helped set up stable, church sign & refreshments
- Mike DeOrdio:** Built the stable
- Janet Robinson:** Helped set up stable
- Warren Robinson:** Snow blowing & helped set up stable
- Joan Archambeau:** Silent Night song sheet & candles
- Erin Paoli:** Facebook Advertisement
- Mike Block:** Plowing the parking lot & shoveling
- Parents:** Helped dress the children.
- Jerry Sabattis:** Coordinated setting up stable & the church sign & plowing the parking lot. Also ran the spotlight & did many, many other things that were needed.

Thank you to all!
Shelley Dawson Smith



Live nativity



Door Spray Artists



Caroling at Brookdale Summerfield



Christian fellowship

Dinner and a Movie
December 3, 2022

Christmas Morning Breakfast
December 25, 2022



We watched the movie "Scrooged" and enjoyed a delicious meal.

Stay tuned for Our next event in February 2023.



Pastor Jack hosted this group for a delicious breakfast and sharing in watching the Christmas Day worship on our new flat screen tv.

thank you

Our staff is so blessed by the generosity of this church. Each of us gives each of you many thanks for your Christmas gift that was presented to us on Christmas Eve. We give thanks for all the ways that you contribute to the ministry of Immanuel as well as supporting and encouraging your Pastor and staff.

~Pastor Jack, Pam, Lisa and Dan
page 5



Stay up to date with all that is happening at Immanuel by checking out our website at www.churchofthebells.org. We also send out a weekly email with current offerings and information. If you would like to be added to this email list, please let Pam in the church office know.

Immanuel United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 335
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Electronic Service Requested
Our Mission
*"To make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world."*

We wish to be good stewards of both financial and environmental resources. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email us at churchofthebells@gmail.com and request removal.



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Worship	8:30am and 10am In Person or Facebook Live 10am Kidz Club during 10am worship
Office Hours	Monday-Friday, by appointment
Handicapped accessible	

Please join us!