

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Dear Saints at Immanuel,

As we start another New Year, we pray that 2021 becomes a great year for all! I know, in comparison to 2020 it just has to be better, right? But that is never a guarantee!

As we await the vaccine and what it will mean for us all, we know that at Immanuel we will continue our ministry in whatever ways we can. In 2020 we were able to offer weekly worship, both virtually and in person, every week! We did not miss a week thanks to the super efforts of our staff and key volunteers like Ashley Davis and Tom Turton. Dan and Lisa stepped up to provide weekly music when the choir had to go on pause, and Pam and I tried to provide worship that would engage us and allow us to praise God through the uncertain days. And we did it!

The year saw people worshipping with us from around NY state, the country and the world as our virtual congregation began to grow. Our Trustees stepped up to develop safe ways to reopen the building and safeguard our beautiful property. Our Finance Team kept good oversight of our financial assets and applied for aid allowing us to continue to meet our obligations. Our SPRC dealt with staffing issues and we spent a few months working remotely. And all of this was necessary because our Administrative Council decided early on that keeping everyone safe here at Immanuel was our highest priority.

Well now friends, we have weathered 2020. Vaccines are starting and 2021 just might offer us some returning to "normal" as we move into the summer months. We might be able to see some "easing" of restrictions as we move through the year. Perhaps the fall might see us be able to be singing in worship and celebrating Communion as we have in the past. BUT... all of this can only happen if we start the year out committing to "staying the course" of remaining safe now. We have endured too much and worked too hard to take a giant step backwards now. I know we are all suffering from what medical experts have termed "Covid-fatigue" but it is so important that we not let our guard down. Stay vigilant, stay healthy, wear your face coverings, wash your hands, and maintain physical distancing and soon we will have this pandemic in our rearview mirror!

So, let's start out this New Year committing to serving Jesus by keeping each other safe and healthy. And in this way Immanuel will be ready to move into the future of our ministry in bold new ways!

Serving Him with you,
Pastor Jack

with God

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE... MATTHEW 19:26

INSIDE...

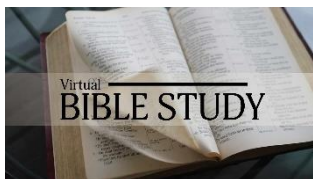
Youth/ Family News
Ministries News



Kidz Club update:

Happy New Year from the Kidz Club! This past December all the Kidz Club participants received an Advent Calendar to count down the days until Christmas! Headed into the New Year, we will operate and function the same as we have all school year, with the online videos and the occasional craft or activity drop off! If any parents would like some extra teaching materials they can reach out and we can get that to them!

Many blessings,
Ashley Davis
Kidz Club Coordinator



Winter Bible Study

We will be starting up a new Bible Study group in January and February! This study will be on the Gospel of John and will run for 8 weeks. The study will be held, via ZOOM, on Monday evenings at 7:00pm and Wednesday mornings at 10:00am!

My tentative schedule is as follows:

Week of January 11	The Mystery of God
January 18	Jesus Offers Life
January 25	Do You Want to Live?
February 1	The Law and Freedom
February 8	Who is the God Whom Jesus Reveals?
February 15	To Be a Disciple of Jesus Christ
February 22	The Holy Spirit Creates and Sustains the Church
March 1	The Glorification of God

There is no book needed for this study but there will be some reading in the Gospel account each week. Just grab your favorite Bible version, and a cup of coffee and you can log on to the ZOOM gathering each week. Each session will be approximately 90 minutes and, since the Monday and Wednesday sessions are identical, you can switch between groups should your schedule require it!

Please send me an email prior to 1/11/21 and I'll send you out the ZOOM invitation each week. Then you just click on the link in the invitation email on your I-phone, tablet or laptop computer. As my grandkids would say... "It's easy-peasy"!

I'm looking forward to seeing you in Bible Study this winter!

~Pastor Jack



Connect with us!

We are worshipping in person on Sunday mornings at 8:30 and 10am. There is a limit of 50 persons for each service. Please wear a mask and sit in designated seats.

Recorded weekly worship continues to be available online at our website www.churchofthebells.org. There is a tab called "Online worship" at the top of the page that will take you to the current week and past weeks worship services.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday Pastor Jack is emailing an encouraging message. If you would like to receive these and other church updates, please email the church at churchofthebells@gmail.com to be added to the email list.

Our church office is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-1pm. Please call as times may vary. Appointments are best to be sure you see who you want.

Pastor Jack is available by phone or email. If you leave a message on our church answering machine, he will give you a call back. His email is pastorjackk@gmail.com.



Words of Thanks

Becky and I would like to thank you all for all the wonderful and thoughtful gifts we received over this holiday season. We have been showered with delicious treats, warm hospitality and your very generous Christmas gift presented to us on Christmas Eve. We have continued to be blessed by your support as we do ministry together in Jesus' name! Thank you one and all! ~Pastor Jack and Becky

2020 was a year like no other and I am overwhelmed by the outpouring of support while I was out for 2 months this past fall. Thank you one and all for the cards, emails, text messages, food, prayers and support as I healed. Special thanks to Pastor Jack who did both of our jobs while I was out. This is not an easy task!! I also appreciate your generosity at Christmas. This congregation is truly a blessing to me in so many ways. God's love shines through you all! ~Pam

We would like to thank all the members of Immanuel for their overwhelming support since the passing of our son, Rob. Words cannot express how much we appreciated all the prayers and cards and offers to help, from so many friends in the church. We would also like to thank Pastor Jack, Pam, and Dan, for giving us comfort and sharing their talents in getting us through this difficult time. We do have a wonderful church family!

~Jim and Marilyn and Mark Vannelli **page 2**

Ministries

ANNOUNCING CHANGES TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2021

Starting in 2018, Immanuel Methodist embarked on a new ministry journey through the creation of the dual staff position of Administrative Assistant/Associate Pastor. That journey has continued through 2020. During that time we were fortunate to have Pamela Kelsey-Gossard agree to take on that dual role and for doing that we are very grateful.

Each of those positions carried significant challenges and a major one was going to be compressing their respective duties into a 40 hour week. We knew going into this that the allocation of time was going to be a fluid situation and would need to be tracked so that it would not become overwhelming. During the time the dual position was active; Pam, the SPRC, and Pastor Jack worked on refining the tasks associated with each position and allocating time between them. It was abundantly clear that there was value to each of the positions. However, Pam made it clear that trying to have both positions managed by one person was becoming an unreasonable expectation.

In the last quarter of 2020, it came time to decide whether that dual role should continue into 2021. Following a review of prior years, Pam recommended we pick one or the other. Further, she believed the Administrative Assistant position was more critical to the day to day functioning of Immanuel than was the Associate Pastor. I, Pastor Jack, and Steve Forward (Finance Chair), were in agreement with Pam's assessment. That recommendation was reviewed and supported by the Administrative Council. Consequently, effective 1/01/2021 the position of Associate Pastor will be discontinued, and the 30hr/week position of Administrative Assistant will be filled by Pam Kelsey-Gossard.

Once again, we want to thank Pam for undertaking what turned out to be an exciting but arduous undertaking; that in spite of significant time constraints, managed to produce valuable services. We look forward to Pam being able to devote all her energy and passion to her role as Administrative Assistant.

Gary C. Merckel Chair S/PPRC



Door Sprays

- Thanks to Dan Martini, owner of Syracuse Christmas tree farm for donating the greens
- Thanks to Mike DeOrdio, Jerry & Denise Sabattis, Dave Russell & Janet & Warren Robinson for cutting the greens.
- Thanks to Ed Owens who helped assemble door sprays.
- Thanks to Joan Archambeau, Angie Keida, Julie DeOrdio, Barb Merckel, Judy Owens, Sheri Molatch, & Denise Sabattis who did an outstanding job decorating the sprays.
- Thanks to the people who purchased door sprays.
- Through the cooperative effort, we made 32 door sprays and as everything is donated, we were able to contribute \$640 to the Mission Team for Disaster Recovery.

~Shelley Dawson Smith



Mitten Tree

On behalf of the Mission Team a heartfelt thank you is extended to everyone who donated to this project. Every branch of our tree was covered with socks, mittens, hats, scarves and gloves. And under the tree were gently used boots and coats. The children and the community of the Onondaga Nation will be warmer this winter because of your generosity. Our goal was 100 items and this year an amazing 365 items were donated! Thank you to Jerry & Denise Sabattis for delivering the items. ~Shelley Dawson Smith



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 laces or putting on new soles and 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 18,012 pairs of shoes in 2019! Ralph donates his time and the supplies, however, he does accept cash donations to help defray the cost of supplies. Immanuel donated 91 pairs of shoes in 2020. Let's continue to help Ralph and the Rescue Mission! The donation box is under the coat hangers in the Narthex. Any questions, call Shelley Dawson Smith at 315-727-0671.



DONATE TO IMMANUEL UMC

We sincerely appreciate the financial support that allows Immanuel to continue its ministries in our community and beyond!

There are 4 ways to give:

1. Mail your check payable to IUMC

Mail to:
Immanuel UMC
PO BOX 335
Camillus, NY 13031



2. Automated Electronic Transfer. If you would like to have electronic withdrawals made from your checking or savings account, you can use a hard copy authorization form that can be found at the church in the mailboxes across from the office in the slot labeled "AUTOMATED DONATION FORM" or can be downloaded by clicking on the Donate button on our website www.churchofthebells.org. You will find a place to click for a form to print and can mail the completed & signed form to:

Immanuel UMC
PO BOX 335
Camillus, NY 13031



3. Online Giving. If you would like to have electronic withdrawals made on your credit card, debit card, or from a checking or saving account, you can visit our website at www.churchofthebells.org and click on the Donate button. Follow the prompts. There is also an APP for your phone. Find more information on our website.

4. Bring your donation to worship on Sunday morning. While we will not be passing the offering plate on Sundays, there is a plate available for you to leave your donation in.

Thanks to the great generosity of this congregation, we have been able to pay all of our regular operating bills, including our staff salaries and are up to date on our Shared Ministries obligations. Thanks be to God!



**OUTSIDE CHRISTMAS EVE
LIVE NATIVITY SERVICE**

For many years several of us have wanted to have a live nativity service at Immanuel but we were never able to do it. This year because of COVID it was decided that we could not have an indoor service so the live nativity became a reality (this could be the only positive thing about COVID). Although it was rainy (I would imagine that Mary & Joseph encountered rain on their journey), about 65 came to celebrate the birth of our savior. There was a stable, donkey, miniature horse and even a goat in the church's parking lot!

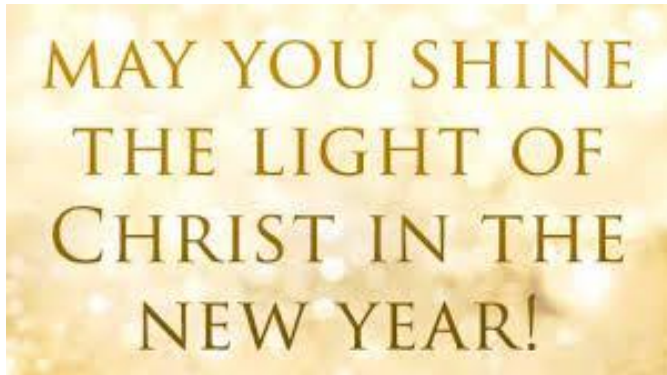
A heartfelt and sincere thank you is extended to the following people who helped make this Christmas Eve truly memorable:

- Elodie Ahl:** Angel
 - Riley Mulligan:** Mary
 - Audra Ahl:** Joseph
 - Marcia Dawson:** Song leader
 - Mike DeOrdio:** Built the stable
 - Robin Polge:** Supplied the star for the stable & assembled baggies containing bells, candles, Silent Night song sheet & a candy cane!
 - Dave Stanton:** Bell Tower Ringer & set up stable.
 - Denise Sabattis:** Church Sign
 - Jerry Sabattis:** Church sign, spot lights, set up stable & did just about anything that was needed.
 - Erin Paoli:** Facebook Advertisement
 - Gary Merckel:** Set up stable.
 - Rt. 80 Stables:** Ollie the donkey, Razzle the mini pony and Rosie the reluctant goat!
- Thank you to all!
Shelley Dawson Smith

Christmas Eve
2020



Immanuel United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 335
Camillus NY 13031
Electronic Service Requested
Our Mission
*"To make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world."*



January/February 2021

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.



Pastor	Pastor Jack Keating
Phone	(315) 487-1171
Email	churchofthebells@gmail.com
Website	www.churchofthebells.org
Worship	Sundays 8:30 and 10am online on our website
Kidz Club	via email and website
Office Hours	Tues., Wed., Fri. 9-1
Handicapped accessible	

Please join us!