

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

## SIMPLE...



Happy Fall to the Saints!

Recently I was re-reading the great book, Simple Church and I came across, once again these paragraphs...

Simple is in. Complexity is out. Out of style at least.

Ironically people are hungry for simple because the world has become much more complex. The amount of information available to us is continually increasing. The ability to interact with the entire world is now possible. Technology is continuing to advance at a rapid pace.

The result is a complicated world with complex and busy lives. And, in this midst of complexity, people want to find simplicity. They long for it, they seek it, pay for it, even dream of it. Simple is in. Simple works. People respond to simple. The simple revolution has begun.

I know many reading these words can agree with these statements. Our lives have become so complex, busy, even over-planned that we are beginning to feel like mice running on treadmills. And I am concerned that we are literally at danger of "burning out" because of all this over-programming.

But we follow a Savior who stepped into his own complicated and polluted religious scene. But Jesus did not play by the rules of the world when he came, in fact, he preferred spending time with tax collectors and sinners. Into the religious community, where the leaders spent their days debating which were the appropriate divisions in society and ranking the commands for the people, Jesus comes. And Jesus brings with him the ability to take the complex and make it simple.

As a revolutionary of simple, Jesus was bothered, I think, by the meaningless and distracting clutter. And today many of our churches have become so cluttered. So cluttered that people have a difficult time encountering the simple and powerful message of Christ. So cluttered that many people have resorted to *doing* church instead of *being* the church. What about our church?

The time-period of November and December can be full of holiday opportunities to really complicate our lives... OR... it can be a time to consciously return to a simpler and more relaxed way of life. Are there holiday traditions in your family that have been set aside because now you are just too busy to accomplish them? Are there people you miss seeing at this time of year, because you just don't have the time? Are you desiring a return to traditions you have missed for the last few years?

Maybe this year, 2023 could be your chance to set aside some of the holiday complexity... in favor of a return to a simpler celebration of the holidays? Here at Immanuel, we will offer an Advent study and other activities that might be of help to you in returning to that simpler celebration at this joyous time of year.

I hope you will join us on a journey to explore a simpler holiday celebration. Not only will you see and feel the results, but you might just also learn to be a designer for other areas of your life. You just might learn to design a simpler holiday for your family and friends. We welcome you to join our journey toward simplicity!

*Pastor Jack Keating*



## INSIDE...

Youth/ Family News  
Ministries News

## Youth/Family



We are still looking to hire a full-time person for Kidz Club on Sunday mornings. Do you know someone who might be a good fit for this ministry? Is God calling you to this ministry?

As we continue in our search, we are thankful for the volunteers who are stepping in and keeping this important ministry available to the children of Immanuel. We always welcome more volunteers!

We also continue the search for our Faith Formation Leader! This person would work with the older youth and be the overall leader of Christian Education. Please keep praying that the person God has in mind for this position answers His call!

~Julie Bills, SPRC Chairperson

## CROP Walk



On October 15th the Greater Syracuse Hunger Walk took place at Onondaga Lake Park. When we left Camillus, the sun was shining however by the time we arrived at the park we needed our umbrellas! Fortunately, the rain didn't last for the duration of the walk. Our team of 3 hearty walkers (Jane Monnell, Pastor Jack & Shelley Dawson Smith) didn't walk the entire 3 miles we gave it our best efforts. At the end of the walk, we were treated to a snack and bottle of water by Liverpool 1st UMC which was very kind of them. [\(picture here\)](#)

I'm happy to say that Immanuel raised \$1,100.00. Thanks to everyone who contributed; your donations will help feed people around the block and around the world. Thank you everyone! Shelley Dawson Smith

## DOOR SPRAYS

It's that time of year again! Please support the Mission Team by buying a beautiful door spray for \$20.00.



Orders will be taken on Nov 5th and Nov 12th in the Narthex.

However, if you are attending church service via social media and would like a door spray please call me and we can figure something out.

We will be making the door sprays on Saturday Nov 18th starting at 9:00a.m. and any help would be appreciated even if you can only help for an hour. Any questions please see or call Shelley Dawson Smith at 315-727-0671.



## Second Sunday Lunch

Last month we had an Autumn themed chili chowder cook-off with twelve crock pots of delicious offerings, along with fruit and four kinds of pies for dessert. It was hard to choose the best! The fellowship team awarded the top three winners ( Barb Blanchard, Darlene Stevens, and Laurine Campbell) with gift baskets of goodies. Check out our website for [pictures](#) of this fun day!

You don't want to miss our next lunch on November 12, after the 10:00 service. You do not need to bring anything.

The lunch is open to everyone, so feel free to invite a friend to church followed by a delicious lunch! We need you to make a reservation by signing up outside the Fireplace Room, so we will know how many servings to prepare.

There is no charge, but donations are much appreciated.



## Annual Turkey Dinner

November 7, 2023

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Take out only

Menu consists of turkey, stuffing, potatoes, gravy, corn, cranberry sauce, coleslaw, rolls, and homemade pie.

### Ticket prices

Adults (ages 13+)	\$15.00
Children (ages 5-12)	\$7.00
Children (under age 5)	Free

Tickets will be available at the door or after worship on Sunday. There is still time to sign up to help!



## Chair Yoga Class

Join us on Tuesdays at 9:30 for an hour of gentle stretching and exercise to improve balance and increase strength and flexibility. We meet in the Fireside Room. As part of the class Barb includes a short discussion of a healthy food every week. Bring a set of hand weights, and wear loose, comfortable clothing.

There is no charge for the class.

Questions? Contact Barb Merckel.

## Ministries News



### All Saints Day

On Sunday, November 5, 2023, we will remember those of our church family who have returned to God in the last year. We will read their names and light a candle during the 10am worship hour. If there is someone you would like to remember that has been gone for longer than a year, then you are invited to bring a candle to church. During communion, you will be invited to bring your candle forward and light it in remembrance of your loved one.



### Advent Mission Opportunities

#### Mitten Tree:

The mitten tree for our friends in need will be put up Nov 19th thru Dec 10th in the Narthex. Please bring in new gloves, scarves, hats, mittens and socks and also gently used children's coats, snow pants, and children's boots. Last year through your generosity we collected 214 items. Any questions please see Shelley Dawson Smith.

#### Angel Tree



The Mission Team invites you to share God's love for children by taking a gift tag from the Angel tree and purchasing a gift in the amount of \$15-\$20. The gifts will be given to children in the Syracuse City School District registered in the Big Brothers, Big Sisters program and the Hillside Family of Agencies.

Big Brothers, Big Sisters gifts will be on BLUE tags. These tags will say boy age 8-12 or girl age 8-12. The gift choice is up to you, though there will be suggestions if you need them. Please **DO NOT** wrap this gift, just attach the angel tag when you bring it back to church.

Hillside gifts will be on WHITE tags and will state a specific gift desired. These gifts **should be wrapped** and returned with the angel tag attached.

Please sign up on the sign-up sheet with your name, phone number and angel tag number.

All gifts need to be returned to church **NO LATER THAN Sunday, December 3.**

Any questions or concerns contact Angela Keida  
315-378-6494.



### Caroling

We will spread some Christmas joy with our friends at Summerfield Village Lane on Sunday, December 10 at 1pm. Come for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday lunch and stay to go with us to sing Christmas carols.



### Heifer Project



This year you will once again have the chance to support Heifer International. Heifer International works in 19 countries around the world providing support to farmers and their communities that changes lives. Giving an animal gift at the holidays is like gifting someone a small business, providing wool, milk, eggs and more. Every donation, no matter how small, makes a difference.

To make a donation, please see Helen or Sara Forward on December 3rd, 10th, or 17th. Donations can be made in cash or check form. If paying by check, please make the check payable to Immanuel UMC and write Heifer in the memo line. Thank you in advance for your continued support.



### NEW CHURCH SIGN PLANNED

With the support of the Administrative Council, the Trustees are proposing to replace the old sign with a state-of-the-art electronic sign in the summer of 2024. This is what our new church sign is going to look like. The cost is (\$25,000-\$30,000). Therefore at the beginning of the year we will be starting a fundraising campaign to achieve our goal. We will be asking everyone to help us achieve this goal.

This is what the new church sign will look like in the summer of 2024. We are going to undertake a fundraising campaign as we move forward with this endeavor. Please help us to achieve this new look.

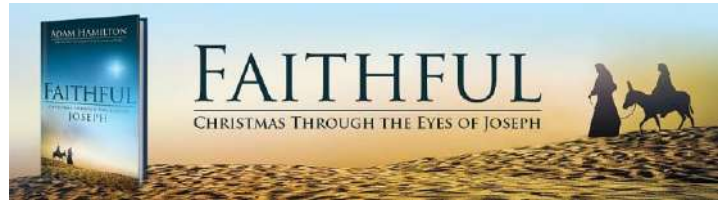




**“Unto You”  
Advent Worship Series**

Join us for our Advent worship series, UNTO YOU, as we walk through the key verses of Luke 2 that remind us that Christ has come to each one of us. Each week we will focus on a different word from the reading that highlights what happened then and how that word applies to our lives today.

Advent I	Dec. 3	“Registered” Luke 2:3	8:30 & 10am
Advent II	Dec. 10	“Lineage” Luke 2:4	8:30 & 10am
Advent III	Dec. 17	“Great Joy” Luke 2:10	8:30 & 10am
Advent IV	Dec. 24	“Firstborn” Luke 2:7	10am ONLY
Christmas Eve	Dec. 24	“Glory” Luke 2:9	4pm & 7:30pm
Christmas Day	Dec. 25	Breakfast and Carols	10am
New Year’s Eve	Dec. 31	“Good News” Luke 2:10	8:30 & 10am



**ADVENT STUDY PLANNED**

This year our Advent Study will be using Adam Hamilton's **FAITHFUL** book. We will gather each Monday afternoon (11/27-12/18) at 1:00pm in the Fireside Room and then again on Wednesday night (11/29-12/20) at 7:00pm on ZOOM.

Hamilton looks at the Christmas story through the lens of Joseph, a man who was certainly **FAITHFUL** to God's Holy Spirit! Each session will be about 90 minutes in length and the Monday afternoon and Wednesday night will be identical in subject matter. That means you have 2 opportunities each week to be a part of our group. The only requirement is that I would like to have a minimum of 4 participants for the ZOOM session. Maybe you'd like to invite family and friends from another location to join you on the ZOOM session? The books have been ordered and cost \$12.50 each. Look for the sign-up soon outside the Fireside Room! And we hope to see you in our Advent Study group this year!

*Blessed*  
TO BE A  
*Blessing*

**Special Mission Opportunities in Nov./Dec.**

Door sprays	
orders	Nov. 5 and 12
Make door sprays	Nov. 18
Caroling at Summerfield Village	Dec. 10
Living Nativity	(Dec.) stay tuned for date
Mitten Tree for children	Nov. 19 – Dec. 10
Angel Tree for children	Nov. 12-26
Heifer International	Dec. 3-17

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."

Give Thanks  
to the *Lord*  
for he is Good,  
*His mercy endures forever*

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](mailto:churchofthebells@gmail.com) and request removal.



Pastor

Pastor Jack Keating

Phone

(315) 487-1171

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[office@churchofthebells.org](mailto:office@churchofthebells.org)

Website

[www.churchofthebells.org](http://www.churchofthebells.org)

Worship

8:30 & 10am

\*In Person or Facebook Live during 10am worship

Office Hours

Monday-Friday, by appointment

Handicapped accessible

*Please join us!*



## POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

Red Poinsettias will be available for placement in the Sanctuary during Advent. The poinsettias can be ordered until **December 17**.

Please fill out the form below and give your order, along with payment of \$10.00 per plant, to Phyllis Girvan, or leave the form and payment in a clearly marked envelope in the church office. (Please make checks payable to Immanuel UMC). Plants may be taken home following worship on Christmas Eve.

(Please print)

Number of plants \_\_\_\_\_ (Please limit one or two persons per plant. If more than this, please use "My Family", "Loved Ones", etc.)

In Loving Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Message: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to donate my plant to the VA Hospital or a shut in. \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no



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