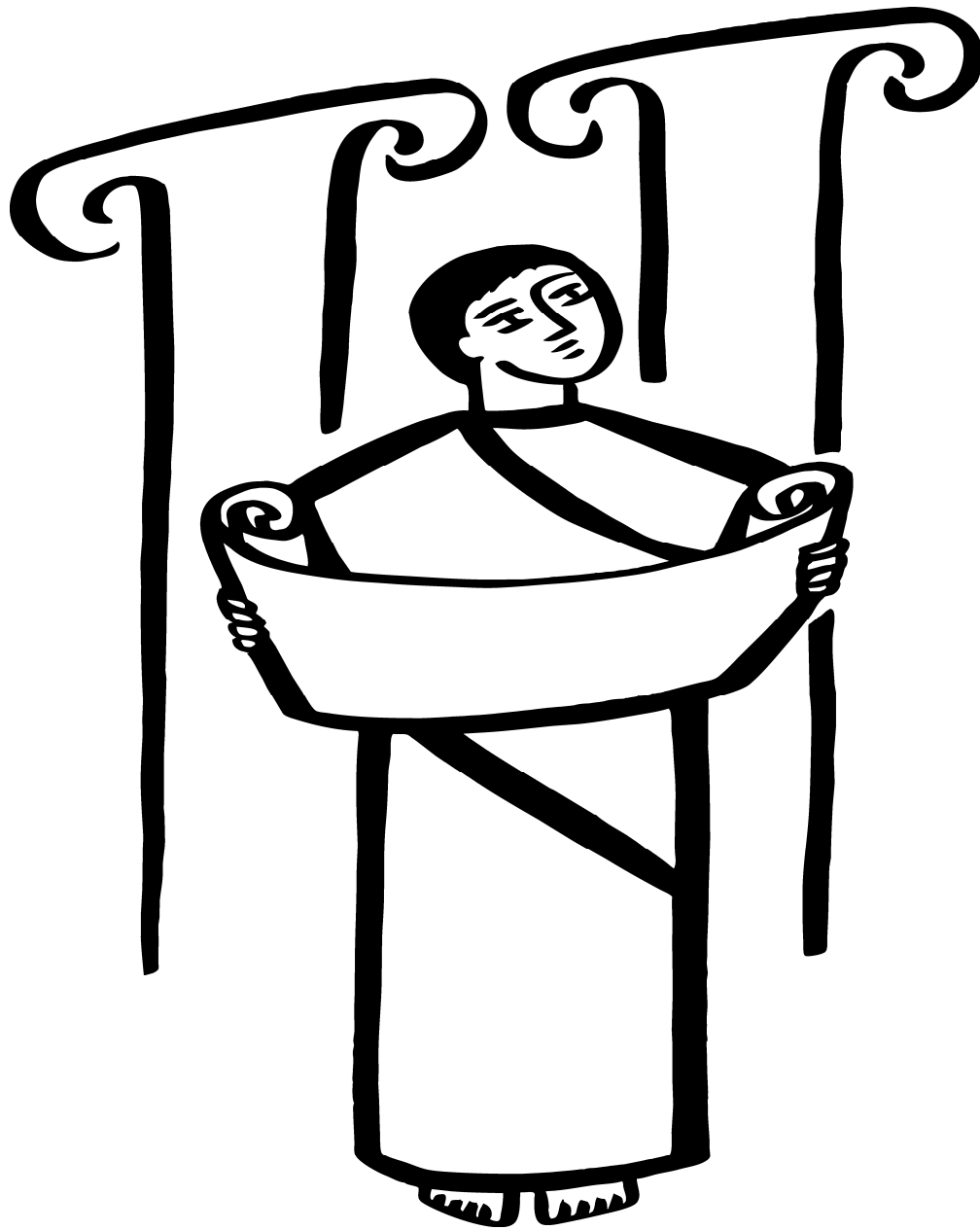


***Sunday, December 29, 2024
First Sunday after Christmas***



Immanuel United Church of Christ

118 Oak Street, Neenah, Wisconsin 54956

E-mail: iuccneenah@sbcglobal.net Phone: 920.722.0381

Worship Leader: Dr. Rev. Tom Fritz

Phone: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday – 920.722.0381

e-mail: iuccneenah@sbcglobal.net

website: iuccneenah.org

God Is Still Speaking

Welcome to Immanuel

*Who ever you are, where ever you are on life's journey,
You are welcome here.*

Spencer Jones

Music Coordinator

Those serving us this Sunday, Dec 29, 2024

Greeters Don and Heather Hessler

Ushers: Don and Heather Hessler

Reader: Pastor

Please pray for:

Beverly Wilfling

Chuck Wolf

Jean Vande Hey

Lois Hoppe

Tom Rihm

Ethan Ketter – Motorcycle accident victim

Jack Turner – Don's father

Church Family – Heather's family

Welcome and Announcements

† *indicates congregation is invited to stand*
(Please sign the attendance sheet)

624 His Eye Is on the Sparrow

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Luke 12:6

Solo on stanzas is optional

1. Why should I feel dis-cour-aged? Why should the shad-ows come?
 2. "Let not your heart be trou-bled," His ten-der words I hear;
 3. When-ev-er I am tempt-ed, When-ev-er clouds a-rise,

Why should my heart be lone-ly And long for heav'n and home When
 And rest-ing on His good-ness, I lose my doubt and fear. Tho'
 When songs give place to sigh-ing, When hope with-in me dies, I

Je-sus is my por-tion? My con-stant Friend is He: His
 by the path He lead-eth But one step I may see: His
 draw the clos-er to Him; From care He sets me free: His

eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me. His
 eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me. His
 eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me. His

eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me.
 eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me.
 eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me.

COMFORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Refrain

I sing be-cause I'm hap-py, I sing be-cause I'm free; For His

eye is on the spar-row, And I know He watch-es me.

Sunday, December 29, 2024—Final Service for Immanuel UCC

Prelude and Ringing of the Bell

Welcome and Announcements

Children's Story: "Aloha and Shalom"

Call to Worship (L=Leader; **P=People**)

L: Gracious God, whose love came to earth at Bethlehem, we rejoice in all the ways that your love has been experienced at Immanuel for over 150 years.

P: We rejoice in all the love that we have experienced in fellowship, worship, and service to our community.

L: We give thanks for the wisdom and grace we have found in scripture and sacrament,

P: and we rejoice in the new life that we have found in them.

L: Even as we rejoice, there is sadness in our hearts today. This ministry that we have loved is coming to a close, and we grieve our loss.

P: Join us, O God, as we worship with joy and sadness, and give us comfort, counsel, and compassion to face this difficult time.

Opening Hymn No. 624 "His Eye Is on the Sparrow"

1. Why should I feel discouraged?
Why should the shadows come?
Why should my heart be lonely
And long for heav'n and home
When Jesus is my portion?
My constant Friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Refrain:

I sing because I'm happy,
I sing because I'm free;
For His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

2. "Let not your heart be troubled;"
His tender words I hear;
And resting on His goodness,
I lose my doubt and fear.
Tho' by the path He leadeth
But one step I may see:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Refrain:

3. Whenever I am tempted,
Whenever clouds arise,
When songs give place to sighing,
When hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to Him;
From care He sets me free:
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.
His eye is on the sparrow,
And I know He watches me.

Refrain:

Unison Prayer of Invocation

Lord, we give you thanks and praise for the love and grace that we have experienced at Immanuel for so long. We thank you for the ways that you have renewed and reshaped us—equipping us to carry on all that was begun in Christ. Join us as we worship you. Increase our joy and go with us into our grief. Then prepare us for all that lies ahead on the journey of faith that we may continue to be partners with Christ in his ministry of love and reconciliation.

Responsive Scripture: Psalm 148 (W=Women, **M=Men**)

W: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights!

M: Praise the Lord all heavenly beings, praise God sun and moon, and all shining stars.

W: Praise the Lord you highest heavens and you waters above the heavens.

M: Let them all praise the Lord, for God spoke and they were created.

W: Praise the Lord all living things. Praise God on the mountains and in the valleys.

**M: Praise the Lord all kings and princes; old and young together.
Let them all praise the Lord!**

First Reading:

1 Samuel 2:18-21,26.

Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord”; and then they would return to their home.

And the Lord took note of Hannah; she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord, and he continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and all people.

Epistle Reading:

Colossians 3:12-17

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so also you must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Gospel Reading:

Luke 2: 41-52

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day’s journey.

Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and he was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and years and in divine and human favor.

Here ends this reading of the scripture

Special Music: "The Hallelujah Chorus" Steve Brandt

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen!

Sermon: "In Favor With God and All People—
the Legacy of Immanuel UCC"

Offering

Unison Prayer of Dedication

You have blessed our congregation for decades, O God, and we are grateful. Receive this last offering of our congregation as you have received all others. Bless our gifts that they may continue to share the good news of Jesus Christ in this community for still more decades into the future. Amen!

Invitation to Communion and the Prayer of Institution

Communion

Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks, O God, for refreshing us at this table of grace for the last time. As we move into the uncertain future, help us to trust that your love will guide us to another table in another place, where we will continue to be reshaped and renewed by the love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!

Letter from the Wisconsin Conference, Rev. Jane Anderson, Associate
Conference Minister

Closing Statement

Rev. Andrew Warner, Director of Development, WI Conference UCC

Today we have celebrated with thanksgiving the life and work of the faith community of Immanuel United Church of Christ as it served as a witness to God's presence for 151 years and provided refuge, comfort, and challenges for God's people. It has served the faithful people of this community for generations.

Darlene Ott, Northeast Association, WI Conference UCC

We give thanks for the many ministers who have served Immanuel UCC throughout its 151 years, for their preaching and teaching, their leadership and guidance. The love and care they have provided for this community, while ending, will not be forgotten.

This building, dedicated and named Immanuel United Church of Christ, together with the land on which it stands, and all objects remaining in it, we now commend to other purposes. We declare that as of December 29, 2024 it is no longer the place of meeting of a congregation of The United Church of Christ.

Rev. Andrew Warner

The founders of the congregation named the congregation Immanuel as witness to the promise of "God is with us" most clearly seen in the Christ-Child whose birth we just celebrated. We give thanks for all the people who gave of themselves to make this congregation a beloved community, one which echoed the love of God through the care of one another and service to the wider community.

I am honored that you entrusted the legacy of Immanuel to the Wisconsin Foundation United Church of Christ. We will continue your legacy of love through support of non-profits in the Neenah area, support of the UCC in Wisconsin, and our mission to make a more just world for all. All the good you have done and your enduring spirit of generosity will live on in your Immanuel UCC Legacy Fund.

Closing Hymn No. 797 "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"

1. Come, ye thankful people, come;
Raise the song of harvest home;
All is safely gathered in
Ere the winter storms begin.
God, our Maker, doth provide
For our wants to be supplied.
Come to God's own temple, come;
Raise the song of harvest home.
2. All the world is God's own field,
Fruit unto His praise to yield;
Wheat and tares together sown,
Unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade, and then the ear,
Then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we
Whole-some gain and pure may be.
3. For the Lord our God shall come,
And shall take His harvest home;
From His field shall in that day
All offenses purge away.
Give His angels charge at last
In the fire the tares to cast,
But the fruitful ears to store
In His garner evermore.

4. Even so, Lord, quickly come
To Thy final harvest-home;
Gather Thou Thy people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin.
There forever purified,
In Thy presence to abide.
Come, with all Thine angels come;
Raise the glorious harvest home.

Commissioning

Darlene Ott

As you leave your gifts to go home by another road remember,
God is with you as you let go of this cherished place.

God will be with you, as you serve in different ways
and pursue different causes.

God will guide you, as you find new friends
in your new congregation and community

Benediction

Postlude with Bells: "I Heard the Bells on
Christmas Day"

Pastor Tom Fritz

797 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

You crown the year with Your bounty. Psalm 65:11

1. Come, ye thank-ful peo-ple, come; Raise the song of har-vest home;
 2. All the world is God's own field, Fruit un-to His praise to yield;
 3. For the Lord our God shall come, And shall take His har-vest home;
 4. E-ven so, Lord, quick-ly come To Thy fi-nal har-vest-home;

All is safe-ly gath-ered in Ere the win-ter storms be-gin.
 Wheat and tares to- geth-er sown, Un-to joy or sor-row grown.
 From His field shall in that day All of-fens-es purge a-way.
 Gath-er Thou Thy peo-ple in, Free from sor-row, free from sin.

God, our Mak-er, doth pro-vide For our wants to be sup-plied.
 First the blade, and then the ear, Then the full corn shall ap-pear;
 Give His an-gels charge at last In the fire the tares to cast,
 There for-ev-er pu-ri-fied, In Thy pres-ence to a-bide.

Come to God's own tem-ple, come; Raise the song of har-vest home.
 Lord of har-vest, grant that we Whole-some grain and pure may be.
 But the fruit-ful ears to store In His gar-ner ev-er-more.
 Come, with all Thine an-gels come; Raise the glo-rious har-vest home.

Office Hours this Week
Pastor's Hours: Tues, Thurs & Fri 10 - 2
Heather's Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs

Looking Forward

We would like for everyone to please sign the Pew Pads again. This will allow us to know who is at services.

Dec 29 Final Worship service

Birthday Blessings

Leonard Blank Dec 30

Brenda Wege Dec 31

EMERGENCY PASTORAL CARE: If you need emergency Pastoral care, call Rev. Tom Fritz at (920-268-5757) Please leave a detailed message. Talk slowly and leave: 1) your name & phone number; 2. which hospital and who the person is and room #; 3. anything else necessary to help him understand the situation. If you need to talk to the secretary, you can reach Heather at 920-734-7843. Any other church concerns, please contact Bob Vande Hey at 920-740-6177.