

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

JANUARY 2017

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

BEFORE YOU START RESOLVING

Erick Sorensen

A little while back one of my young sons got into the habit of flippantly saying the word "hate". A toy wouldn't work and he'd say "I hate this toy." He couldn't pass a level on an X-Box game and he'd say "I hate this game." He knew he wasn't allowed to say it and that he would be in trouble if he used that word again. But even new habits die hard. So one day after a heated wrestling match with his brother I heard him once again say, "I hate you." Now none of these things were said in a sort of vicious anger, but "hate" just became the word of choice to describe anything uncomfortable. So because I warned him and he did it again, I disciplined him and then had a very serious talk with him about the word. I explained to him how awful its meaning was. By the end of it, he very sincerely promised me, he resolved with me that he wouldn't say the word again. I could tell he meant it, but it wasn't even before the day ended that I saw him fumbling with something and what did he say? "I ha..... this thing." I was looking right at him and said, "What did you say?!" He said "I hay this thing. Dad, I hay this thing."

I tell you that story because when I think about New Year's resolutions I can't help but acknowledge that most of the time our resolutions to change end up just like my son's resolution to stop saying that word. For a little while we may try, but most of the time we don't end up doing what we want (Rom. 7:15). We'll either start making compromises or just give up. We resolve to "lose the weight" or "quit smoking" or "exercise more" or _____ (you fill in the blank), and almost inevitably stumble back to where we started.

With this proven track record of failure, should we even resolve (determine) to improve anything anymore? Well, the Bible's answer to that question is Yes and No. On the "Yes" side of things it seems pretty clear that we are called to make some effort. Check out what the Apostle Peter says in 2 Peter 1:

Make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

He goes on to say,

Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.



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Pretty clear to me.... Yes, we can always resolve to improve in certain areas.
But.....

Contrary to what many might teach, resolving towards growth without the proper food, the proper fuel, is a recipe for failure. The truth is, most of the time our resolutions are built on a solid foundation of Law. We either fear what will happen if we don't change, or we hope for the many blessings that will supposedly come if we do change. If our desires for growth are born out of that soil of punishment and reward, well, we may change outwardly, but inwardly (where it really counts), we still won't be where we should be. It seems to me that on that front, the Bible would tell us, "No, New Year's Resolutions will only harm you unless they are born out of the proper soil."

If Christians are going to have any dynamism, freedom, life, liberty, obedience, power, joy, peace, patience, you name it, the Bible's pretty clear that we must grow from the gospel. That's how Peter begins his letter we just quoted from (and for that matter, that's how the rest of the New Testament speaks too!).

You have been granted all things that pertain to life and godliness. He has called you, He has granted to you great promises, He has saved you from the corruption that is in the world already, etc.

Here's the point: As a Christian, whatever you resolve to do always must be grounded in this great truth: In Christ, God loves me, accepts me, saves me right where I'm at. There is nothing I can do to lose his favor, or gain his favor more. Christ has done it all for me. I am a new creation in Christ. The old has gone, the new has come. I am a slave to righteousness now and I am not in bondage to the flesh anymore. It is finished.

Period.

Martin Luther said it this way in his little writing, *The Freedom of the Christian*:

It ought to be the primary goal of every Christian to put aside confidence in works and grow stronger in the belief that we are saved by faith alone. Through this faith the Christian should increase in knowledge not of works but of Christ Jesus and the benefits of his death and resurrection.

When this is THE THING you're steeped in, well, a funny thing begins to happen: You actually find yourself wanting to be better. Listen to Titus 2:

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

What is it according to Paul that will "train us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions"? ***"The grace of God"***.

What is it according to Paul that will make us a people ***"zealous for good works"***? The grace of God manifesting itself through our ***"Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us."***

Too often, I come across people that have come to believe they're not worthy enough to come to Church, or pray, or read the Word, and I just have to say all that shows me is that they're not grasping the depth, the very purpose of the Gospel. The Gospel is for sinners. Only sinners. The Gospel says, literally, no matter what you do, what you've done, you ARE accepted, you ARE forgiven and that will never change. That voice telling you you're not worthy to pray, read, go to Church or whatever else it is? That's the voice of the devil screaming out from the pit of hell. DO NOT LISTEN!

So go ahead, make your resolutions, pray for change, confess when you don't, but do it knowing that your relationship to God is already fully secure due to the work of Christ on your behalf. Then, maybe, just maybe, you'll find yourself starting to change.



January Baptismal Birthdays

Barbara Arnoux—1/01
 Bruce Cueno—1/01
 Michael Dueber—1/01
 Donald Long—1/01
 Mary Long—1/01
 William Maihack—1/01
 Susan Maihack—1/01
 Glenda Mockros—1/01
 Quirin Ortmanns—1/01
 Marie Schwarz—1/01
 Sarah Snodgrass—1/01
 Linda Smetana—1/03
 Erika Christiansen—1/06
 Gail Wycoff—1/06
 Katherine Christiansen—1/17
 Debra Gehring—1/21
 Andrew Pritchard—1/21
 Peter Marquardt—1/25
 Joshua Snodgrass—1/25
 Matthew Herrmann—1/31



January Birthdays

Judy Cueno—1/03
 Kit Lenser—1/05
 Katherine Christiansen—1/06
 JoAnn Zuba—1/07
 Barbara Bender—1/08
 Thomas Amato—1/10
 Karen Braun—1/12
 Marion Engelking—1/15
 Emma Egan—1/19
 Margaret Herbst—1/21
 Brandon Koth—1/22
 Vivian Frazier—1/28
 Karen Arneson—1/29
 David Christiansen—1/29
 Briana Sobecks—1/30



January Anniversaries

Debra & John Gehring—1/01
 Judy & Jim Keith—1/26

A WORD FROM WENDY

Open Arms is 10 years old! We opened on January 2, 2007 with 2 children in attendance. The next week we doubled to 4 children and we have been growing ever since. A little fun fact: some of the oldest children that began at Open Arms are now in 8th grade this year, time flies! Many of our current kindergarten students started here at Open Arms in the infant room, graduation will be fun! What a blessing!

Over the past 10 years, we have employed approximately 75 people, and several of them are still serving here at Open Arms. We have also served MANY families. We are currently serving 115 children and their families and if I go back and count I know we have served over 450+ families in all. What a blessing! How do we serve? We serve through our bible classes and church. Through our moms and dads groups. Through Messy Church Nights, open gym time, Thanksgiving feast, Easter Breakfast, Italian night/talent show, Santa Breakfast and much more. Through building relationships, visiting with parents and caring for their most precious gifts, their children.

It is such a joy to watch all the learning that takes place each and every day from music with Ms. Ann, to finger plays and Jesus time in the infant/toddler rooms, to Spanish, chapel, art, reading and so much more. If you have a special memory you would like to share with us please do so. Birthdays are a time for celebrating and remembering!

May God grant us many more wonderful years filled with children and families to serve and teach about Jesus!

Please join us on Saturday, January 14th from 9-11am to celebrate our 10th birthday.

We will have Geoff Akins the Bubble Guy here at 9:30am in the gym and birthday cake following. This event is for congregation members too! We appreciate your support and prayers and we hope you will join us.

Happy New Year and May God bless you during 2017!

Wendy Pritchard, Director of Early Childhood Ministry

Kat's Corner January 2017

Happy New Year!!!! Have you made any resolutions for 2017? If so, good luck with them. If not, maybe consider – I will be more committed to being an active part of OUR Immanuel community.

You ask, how can I accomplish this goal? What is there for me to do? Well, maybe it's attending a Bible study, or maybe it's joining a board and help in the planning and decision making. How about taking time to read to the children during the week. You say, but I work, ok then consider being a prayer partner for a classroom. You can pray anywhere. Would you consider being an usher? How about sharing a skill or talent that you have? We have several projects to complete that will need wood workers, electricians, painters, tiling skills, plumbing, etc. Could you spare a Saturday or Sunday afternoon to help with projects?

Looking for something simpler? Keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to serve. Watch the newsletter and bulletins. Listen for announcements. I will be praying for more participation in our faith community, that each of you consider to answer the call to service. Let's make 2017 the year we prove statistics wrong – that 20% of the people do 80% of the work. Commit to being more active here and you may even make some new friends in the process.

2016 Giving Statements – The goal is to have them ready by January 31, 2017. They will be available for pick-up in the narthex through February 12th and those remaining will be mailed. Please help us save on postage by picking up your statement before or after Sunday service.

Mission of the Month is continuing in 2017. If you have a local / US mission you would like us to support, please feel free to contact me with the information. **In January**, we will be supporting **Bethesda Lutheran Communities in Wisconsin**. They offer residential community-based homes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They also offer day programming, employment services and short-term care and respite options, as well as educational support and camps.

A GIANT THANK YOU to the brave crew that accomplished what others said could not be done. On a cold December morning, a group of our members came together and with some muscle and brains, some out of the box thinking, a pick-up truck and a lift, they managed to change out the flood lights in the front peaks of the sanctuary. They also changed out a bad light fixture which was too high for our ladder, two blown parking lot lights and the giant exhaust fan in the peak on the stage. This crew was led by Al Zara and included Dave Christiansen, Bruce Cueno, Mike Snodgrass, Brian Mehaffey, Tim Marquardt, Adam & Jessie Dinkleman, Walter and Wally May, and Luke Zhang. If I missed anyone I apologize. What a joy and a huge blessing to have this many people show up to help with Kathy's list of tricky tasks to tackle. Thank you again!!!!

Kathy Gerken

kgerken@immanuelglenview.org



A NOTE FROM ANN

2017 is unique because it begins with a Sunday. Most people will just appreciate the fact that they get to have January 2nd off and not give any more thought to the way the calendar falls. But when you think about it, God is giving us a wonderful reminder. We start the New Year with a day of worship. Worship brings an opportunity to stop, reflect, and say thanks.

Many people write resolutions to begin the year and have targeted habits they'd like to change in the coming year. Each person evaluates for himself whether or not the resolution is achievable (and those deemed "too hard" are tossed aside). Plans are made on how a goal will be accomplished. Often money is spent to get the necessary tools for success. Support is found. Each person is determined that 2017 will be better than 2016 was. We all know the punch line . . . by January 8th most of those resolutions will be broken and set to the side.

But think about the combination again . . . January 1st and Sunday. Worship. The focus of our worship is God. Now go to the next step, what if we focus on God while we make resolutions? After all, it is in Christ that we have been made new creations. Does it make a difference if you look to God to be the source of change in your life? God recognizes we aren't perfect, but He believes in redemption. As Martin Luther wrote, each day we get up and drown the Old Adam as we remember our baptism. God has made us new and He continually gives us that fresh start with His forgiveness.

So as you contemplate any resolutions you might set for yourself, ask God to be a part of the process. Have a talk with Him. Look to Him to provide what you need. Life can become so much easier when we rely on God's strength and power instead of trying to do it all on our own. May God's richest blessings be yours in 2017.

A Word about Hospital Notifications

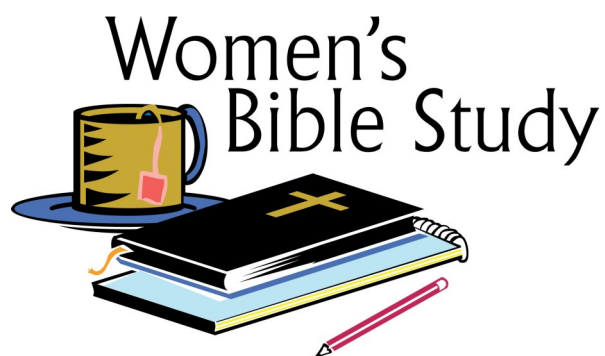
Immanuel staff would like to remind all of our members that hospitals no longer alert churches when members have been admitted as patients. Because of the privacy laws that have been enacted, hospitals are no longer free to release the names of current patients. Even if you identify Immanuel Lutheran Church as your home church, we are not given that information. No longer can we make a phone call to area hospitals to receive a list of our members who have been admitted.

If you or a loved one is scheduled for surgery, a hospitalization or time in a nursing facility, please alert us here in the church office (847-724-1034). The alert needs to come from you. If you do not notify us, we have no way of knowing where you are. Thank you for understanding this change that has come with the new laws.

Women's Bible Study—New Day & Time**Thursdays at 6 PM****Real Women, Real Faith**

Jan. 19	Mary, Mother of Jesus
Jan. 26	Mary Magdalene
Feb. 2	Mary of Bethany

This video study unearths fresh insight into six influential women of the Bible. It looks at how God moved in their lives and how their struggles are like our own.

**Tuesday Bible Study****1:30 PM****Growing Older & Wiser**

Jan. 17	Wise Up!
Jan. 24	Wisdom Hunt
Jan. 31	Listening to the Young

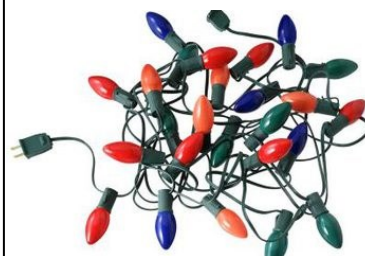


**4th Annual Chili Cook-off****Sun., Jan. 8**

Bring a crockpot of your favorite chili to church on Jan. 8. After worship, we'll join together in the church basement to taste the entries. Everyone will get one vote as we determine the Best 2017 Immanuel Chili. Once we vote, we can all fill up on our favorite version.

Un-hanging the Greens**Sunday, Jan. 8**

Calling all hands to help take off the ornaments and put away the lights. We all appreciate having a beautiful sanctuary for the holiday but now it is time to put everything away. On Jan. 8, we will be doing this job after worship. We'll have our chili first and then take down the decorations. Please plan to stay and help.

**Open Arms' 10th Birthday Party Sat., Jan. 14 9-11AM**

It is hard to believe but Open Arms is celebrating **TEN** years of God's grace and blessings. We mark this anniversary with joy and thanks.

It will be a special celebration as we have invited Geoff Akins, the Bubble Wonder, to come and entertain us with his bubble magic. (Show at 9:30 AM). Rounding out the morning will be birthday cake. We invite all to come and join us for this special event.

**Youth Group****Sun., Jan. 15****4-7 PM**

It's time for **Nerf Gun Capture the Flag!** Grab your Nerf Gun and plan to join us for this favorite event. Leave the bullets at home . . . we have a brand new "youth supply". Bring a friend and introduce them to the joy of this sport!

Orphan Train**Wed., Jan. 25 at 7:30 PM**

We will be discussing *Orphan Train* by Christina Baker Kline. This historical fiction book weaves the story of an old woman who rode the orphan train as a child to lead a new life in the Midwest with a foster child who comes to work with her. Both women have gone through family struggles and have been passed from home to home. As they share their stories, they come to better understand their own pasts. All are invited to participate.

**Movie Night****Friday, Jan. 27 at 7 PM*****101 Dalmatians***

Bring a blanket, pillow, and/or chair and join us as we watch this Disney classic (we'll show the animated version) in the gym. Snacks and drinks are allowed.

January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Happy New Year!	2 Office/ School closed	3	4	5	6	7
8 Chili Cook-off and Un-hanging the Greens: After worship	9	10	11	12	13	14 Open Arms' 10th B-day Party 9 am
15 Youth Group 4 pm	16	17 Bible Study 1:30 pm Confirmation 6 pm	18 Quilting 9 am Mom's Group 8 pm	19 Women's Bible Study 6 pm	20	21
22	23	24 Bible Study 1:30 pm	25 Book Club 7:30 pm	26 Women's Bible Study 6 pm	27 Movie Night 7 pm	28
29	30	31 Bible Study 1:30 pm				

Please refer to your weekly worship bulletin for any changes or additions to the calendar.

Immanuel Lutheran Church & Open Arms Christian Child Development Center

1850 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60025 Church: 847-724-1034 Open Arms: 847-724-6092 Fax: 847-724-1038 E-mail: info@immanuelglenview.org

Church: www.immanuelglenview.org Open Arms: www.openarmsglenview.org

Every Sunday (except when noted):

Sunday School 8:45 am / Teen & Adult Bible Study 8:45 am

Parent & Me Class 9:00 am / Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 am

Immanuel Lutheran Church & Open Arms
Child Development Center

1850 Chestnut Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025
847-724-1034
Fax: 847-724-1038

Email: info@immanuelglenview.org
Website: www.immanuelglenview.org

Immanuel's Mission Statement:

We serve the Lord with joy and gladness through
loving others as He loved us, by serving others as

IMMANUEL'S STAFF

PASTOR

REV. DAVID BARBER

DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRY

WENDY PRITCHARD

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

ANN BARBER

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

KATHY GERKEN

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

TIM MARQUARDT

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

BETH NEAL

PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP EVERY SUNDAY.

SUNDAY SCHOOL (AGES 3-6TH GRADE): 8:45 AM
YOUTH BIBLE CLASS: 8:45 AM
ADULT BIBLE CLASS: 8:45 AM
WORSHIP WITH HOLY COMMUNION: 10:00 AM

Tuesday afternoons-1:30 PM—Bible Study (Church Basement)

Thursday evenings-6:00 PM—Women's Bible Study (Youth Room)

Wednesday mornings-9:15 AM—Men's fellowship

January— Upcoming Events

Sun.	1/1	Happy New Year!
Mon.	1/2	Office and school closed
Sun.	1/8	Chili Cook-off: After Worship
Sun.	1/8	Unhanging of the greens: After Chili Cook-off
Sat.	1/14	Open Arms' 10th Birthday Party: 9-11 AM
Sun.	1/15	Youth group: 4-7 PM
Tues.	1/17	Bible Study: 1:30
Tues.	1/17	Confirmation: 6 PM
Wed.	1/18	Quilting: 9 AM
Wed.	1/18	Mom's Group: 8 PM @ Curragh Irish Pub in the Glen
Thurs.	1/19	Women's Bible study: 6:00 PM
Tues.	1/24	Bible Study: 1:30
Wed.	1/25	Book Club: 7:30 PM
Thurs.	1/26	Women's Bible Study: 6:00 PM
Fri.	1/27	Movie Night—101 Dalmatians: 7 PM
Tues.	1/31	Bible Study: 1:30