

THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER

942 Grape Avenue, Fisher, IL 61843-8512

(217) 897-6170

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF OSMAN

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

Reverend Jeffrey McPike, BCC

January 2012



Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given;
While angels sing with tender mirth,
A glad new year to all the earth.
Martin Luther

From Pastor McPike

“Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year...”

A hymn that was introduced in “Hymnal Supplement ‘98” by that title has this refrain for six of its seven stanzas: “Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace another year of grace.” It is also in our current hymnal as #896. It reminds us that while time seems to keep racing along, God’s grace is there with us to meet each new challenge.

Since my coming to be with you in 2008 when Pastor Peters broke his hip (on the day of Epiphany, January 6, 2008, I believe), we have seen several changes right here at Immanuel. Pastor tried to get better, tried to come back; that didn’t work out, and within a year he was singing with the angels in the church triumphant. I was in a position to fill the role of under-shepherd of the Good Shepherd following Pastor’s death, but felt that with my other responsibilities of hospitals I could not do it alone, and so we applied for and received two vicars – two different men that both delighted and challenged us for two years. They learned from us, we learned from them. And just as we were settling into that routine, that old nasty “C” word (change!) came along again with the word: “no more vicars,” due to a shortage of men enrolled at the seminaries. Now what? God’s grace steps in again, and during our period of evaluation, we became acquainted with Pastor Schmidt, who has blessed us with his presence and unique talents that are a compliment to my own ministry among you. Once again, what was a rather daunting possibility of a pastor (me) serving two full-time charges (Osman and Carle) ends up being a workable situation with Pastor Schmidt’s help along the way.

So here we are at 2012. “Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace another year of grace.” God has blessed us in this situation. While other churches are in financial trouble, we are running a surplus. Our attendance is holding steady. That tells me that,

overall, the congregation is generally content with how things are working.

Do we have room for improvement? Certainly. We always do. As I look at the list of folks on the membership list, I see those who come regularly, those who come at times, and those whom I wouldn’t know if I walked right past them on the street. That points out a difficulty that we face moving forward in our present arrangement – reaching out to folks who are not active, and staying in touch with those who find it necessary to become less connected for whatever reason.

Following the announcement that no more vicars would be assigned, I asked the congregation for a special meeting which was held in April. This meeting was necessary as the district was suggesting that a possible solution for both the synod and Immanuel would be to accept one of the seminary graduates as pastor, to come following the conclusion of Vicar Fenker’s time with us. I felt personally unsettled about this solution. I tried to keep my personal feelings out of it, which of course is hard based on how I have come to love you all. But I felt, and articulated to you at that time, that would simply not be fair to a new graduate to be somewhat “thrust” into a situation which the congregation could very well feel it had no real choice about. Plus, making a decision of such magnitude was not something that should be done in a matter of a couple of days, which is exactly the situation we were in. The solution I came to was to suggest a six month “evaluation period” in which I take the full load, look for possible pastors to help out and we just simply get a feel for how things are going to go and how it could work.

Here we are at the end of the six months, or nearly so. Pastor Schmidt has come on board with us as a regular helper. And so, basically this suggests that there are three basic parties for this arrangement. One is me; one is Pastor Schmidt; and one is the congregation. The arrangement itself is a bit

“nontraditional,” and involves each “party” giving and taking just a bit. The two pastors each have full-time jobs already, and so obligations at Immanuel are alongside full-time jobs for both. For the congregation, the other “party” at the table (as it were), this means that there are daytime, week day sorts of things that may not always be easiest to get done, or that other arrangements may have to be made to get them done.

So far, each “party” is in agreement that this arrangement is workable. Of course, there are some significant benefits. For one thing, a church having two preachers regularly preaching is usually one that approaches 1,000 or more members. Additionally, the experience level of pastors that are affordable by a church Immanuel's size is usually about ten years or so from graduation. Pastor Schmidt has been in ministry for ten years and Pastor McPike for twenty-three. Not only are these advantages, but the membership of the congregation has opportunity to step up to accomplish things as well.

Part of the “evaluation” phase was also to use some sort of “instrument,” a survey of some form to give members a chance to give their feedback about how things were going. After contact with the District, no such “simple” tool was available, which is why none was used during the period of evaluation. The District does have a rather lengthy self-evaluation process to allow the congregation to look at its ministry in its context for the last number of years that will involve several District leadership officials and considerable effort on the part of the congregation in the form of reports, documentation, interviews, meetings and such. This will be discussed at the Annual Meeting.

The proposal, then, is that the arrangement with Pastor McPike providing primary pastoral care and oversight, Pastor Schmidt assisting, and the two being paid from the same basic pastoral care budget as the pastor/vicar were previously, will be placed before voters at the Annual Meeting. This situation will be reviewed annually to determine if it is still working well for all parties involved. If anyone has any questions or concerns about this arrangement, please contact Pastor McPike.

Summer Vicar?

While we are not able to obtain a “traditional” vicar, there is still some possibility for a student to come that would both help the student gain experience and the congregation to stay connected to the education of pastors. “Summer Vicars” are students who have completed their first year of seminary. The arrangement is informal simply between the student and the congregation. Seminary students having completed their first year usually have the entire summer off, and often have bills to pay, etc., and are in

need of a summer job. For single students, rather than working at some non-ministry related job (like fast food, for instance), some would prefer a job that would pay them a bit and also give them some additional supervised experience. Pastor McPike had two summer vicars while in Urbana, and both students found the experience to be helpful as part of their formation as pastors.

A great advantage of this arrangement would be the presence of someone for daytime sorts of things at Osman during the summer – first and foremost, Vacation Bible School. Some routine pastoral calling that is rather a challenge in the present arrangement could also happen. This will also be discussed at the Annual Meeting.

Electronic Records.

Church records historically are kept in a large, handwritten book in the church office. This can work well, except that this is the only copy of such records in existence. Damage or destruction of that single book means the loss of years of the history of the church and its membership.

Computers solve that problem in more than one way. The records can be kept in more than one place, or “backed up.” Also, such record keeping can usually be done in a secure way by using a system that works right on the Internet, which allows people access from anywhere there is an internet connection. Of course, because church records contain information that not just everyone wants known, a level of security is called for with such an arrangement.

Pastor McPike has come up with a system of computer records for the Church website that is password protected. In the coming months, the membership list as well as “official acts” (baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals) will be entered onto this system. The “membership system” is designed that each family can have access to their own record at the church by a unique username and password. Other “super users” (such as pastors, secretary) can have access to everyone’s information for the purpose of keeping our information up to date. Once this information is entered, each person who has log-in information will be able to connect in to find phone numbers and such that are usually only published in a church directory on an occasional basis. Of course, any information that someone does not want published will be protected as well.

The system is free. Pastor McPike found a free program on the Internet that was installed on Immanuel’s website and adapted for use for a Lutheran congregation. As time goes on, when we get more familiar with the system, we will tell you more about it. In the meantime, if you wish to have access, please

send an EMAIL to Pastor McPike and you will be sent information on how to sign-on.

Also, volunteers are going to be needed to enter the information about baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals. If you have a computer and an Internet connection and would like to help, please contact Pastor McPike.

Thank You!

Pastor, Sara, and Ryan thank one and all for the gifts, cards, good wishes that were given by members this Christmas season. Your adoption of us into your family here in Osman is truly heart warming. Thanks, and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to one and all!

LutherTour 2012.

Brochures for the LutherTour 2012 (July 8-19) are in the back of the church. They are also available on the church website <http://www.OsmanLutheran.org>. If you have questions, please see Pastor McPike. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let Pastor know. He has plenty of brochures!

Electronic Newsletter?

The Church newsletter will continue to be printed as it is now. And the Newsletter is available electronically on the church website <http://www.OsmanLutheran.org>. For those that prefer a printed copy, that will still be available. For those who would rather have the electronic form, that can be made available by delivery to your EMAIL box. If you would like to continue to receive the newsletter in print as always, that's how it will stay. If you aren't that interested in the print version and would like to have it delivered to your EMAIL, please send Pastor McPike a note (Pastor@OsmanLutheran.org) letting him know both your preference for the electronic form and your preferred EMAIL address. Newsletters will be delivered from "Newsletter@OsmanLutheran.org." If you have questions, please ask Pastor McPike.

Thank You from Vicar Aaron Fenker

Dear Immanuel,

I have wanted to write for quite some time, but two illnesses and two insanely busy quarters have prevented me until now. I hope this brief note finds all of you well -- in some way, I know it does for I know first hand how the Lord blesses you.

I wanted to thank you so very much for your surprising gift to me that I received last quarter. It truly came as a shock! It came at a very busy time and just knowing that you are still caring for me, lifted my spirits.

My classes keep me very busy with so much work -- it's amazing I'm still able to keep it all straight. Both Anna and I are still both doing very well, though the stresses of my placement weigh us down. I know that

the Lord has it all in his hands, but ask you to continue to keep us in your prayers during this stressful time.

I wish the Lord's blessings on each of you. I know he is faithful and will do it."

All love in Christ, Aaron

Ways to Use Your Time and Talent

Watch the bulletin board for many ways to give of your time and talents here at Immanuel Osman. There will be a sign-up for:

1. Visiting Shut-Ins – provides an opportunity for members to visit our shut-ins once a month.
2. Fellowship Club – provides an opportunity for members to coordinate an evening of fun with others every three months.
3. Altar Guild – provides an opportunity for you to serve the church with altar preparation.

See Debbie Lammle if you have any questions!

Thrivent News

The Annual Meeting and election for the McLean County Thrivent was held on Sunday, November 13, 2011, at Shannon's Five Star Restaurant in Bloomington. After some business matters, the election for the county board, and entertainment, a great meal was served.

Thrivent will meet on Sunday, January 15, 2012, after the worship service. Please bring all ideas for a benefit recipient so that we can start planning a benefit in March.

Choice Dollars! Our congregation received much more money this year for Thrivent Choice Dollars. We thank all the members who donated their money to our congregation. The money was used for the following things this year: part of the purchase of the AED defibrillator; shipping for the boxes that the VBS children made for Operation Christmas Child; some of the supplies for the fall hayride and wiener roast; and the meat for the church picnic.

We were also involved in two McLean County "Care in Communities" activities. We sponsored a soup supper benefit for Andy Heckman in March and we also made stockings for the prisoners at the Lincoln Correctional Center. The volunteer hours for these projects were greatly appreciated.

Fellowship Club

Agnes Martinie, Darryl Redding, and the Lammle's hosted Fellowship Club on November 27, 2011. A light lunch of sandwiches, chips, cinnamon apples, and desserts were served. Agnes Martinie and Esther Lutz were recognized for their birthdays in November.

Everyone enjoyed playing dominoes and rummy cube. Come and join in on the fun again in February!



Esther Lutz and Agnes Martinie were recognized for having birthdays in November at the Fellowship Club.

Minutes of the LWML Meeting

The LWML held its last meeting of the year on December 8, 2011. President Debbie Lammle called the meeting to order with thirteen members present. Barb Whitehouse Gercken and President Lammle read a devotion on the Lord's Prayer, followed by Shirley Sprau reading a spiritual book as topic.

The minutes and Treasurer's Report were read and approved. Mites were collected, and a prayer recited. A handout was passed out stating how Immanuel Osman compared with other societies in the zone with Mite giving and operational costs. Correspondence was read from the Seminary Student, Luke Wolters, and a News Release read celebrating \$100.00 million in Mites.

A report was given by Debbie Martin, Mission Growth Coordinator, stating that 25 quilts and 14 Fabric Kits, as well as \$75.00, were taken to the LWR drop-off location in Gibson City from the Osman LWML.

Several cards were sent to members of the congregation from the LWML. Thanks were given to the following members:

Brenda Hendricks and Connie Warsaw for requesting the \$400.00 from Thrivent for the project to the Lincoln Correctional Center; Barb Gaines for donating artificial flowers for LWML Sunday; Debbie Martin for delivering the LWR boxes to Gibson City; and Shirley Sprau and Marsha Warsaw for preparing the ballot for the election of officers. Other thanks were given to those contributing to the Fabric Kits, tying quilts, visiting shut-ins, saving used *Portals of Prayer*, attending the Fall Rally, serving on the Food Committee, helping with LWML Sunday, assisting with the Christmas stockings, and donating 2012 calendars for the Lincoln Correctional Center.

A special thanks was also given to the outgoing officers, and all those who helped on special

committees, served refreshments, and gave topics throughout the year.

Old Business included Wilma Grussing giving a detailed report on the Fall Rally held on September 15, 2011.

New Business included passing the motion for combining with the Ladies Aid for a Christmas gift for Pastor McPike and Pastor Schmidt.

We also voted on sponsoring a Soup Supper before the next Ash Wednesday service. Debbie Lammle, Marsha Warsaw, and Barb Gaines volunteered to be on the committee.

A motion was made and seconded that the LWML give a "Goodie Box" to the college students in our congregation close to the end of their next semester.

Debbie Lammle volunteered to continue to correspond with the seminary student. Quilting dates will be decided later. A general request was made for making tote bags for the inmates being released from the Lincoln Correctional Prison, and a pattern for the bags was distributed to all the members.

It was suggested that we give prayer requests to our Secret Pals throughout the year. Any member with a pen pal who has a specific prayer request may pin a note under their picture on the back bulletin board.

The election of officers was then held, followed by the Lord's Prayer and common table prayer. The group revealed Secret Pals and drew new ones for the coming year.

Debbie Lammle and Brenda Edwards then served delicious refreshments. All the members left in the holiday spirit!

A Letter to the LWML

Sorry it has taken so long to write back but I just now found your letter that I saved. By now the seasons have changed, lives have been saved and lost, and the battles continue.

I want you to know that you and your organization helped me and a few of my battle buddies out with your kind thoughts, prayers, and, of course, goodie box! I hope this letter finds you all warm and well and I know that with faith and praise, we can accomplish a great deal.

My tour is coming to a close and I can't help but think about loved ones at home and in finding this letter, the good neighbors I've been blessed with. Take care and May God Bless and Keep You!

Toby Johnson (nephew of Greg and Joy Johnson)

Church Council Meeting

The Church Council Meeting held on Tuesday, December 13, 2011, was called to order by Chairman Lee Whitehouse in the church Annex with Pastor

McPike opening the meeting with a message from John, Chapter 1.

Members in attendance: Mike Hendricks, Jill Hardesty, Darwin Warsaw, Aaron Warsaw, Lee Whitehouse, Shane Zimmerman, Butch Sprau, and Pastor McPike.

Secretary's Report:

Secretary Jill Hardesty read the minutes from the November meeting with no additions or corrections to the minutes. Motion was made by Mike Hendricks to approve the minutes as read. Second by Darwin Warsaw. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer Mike Hendricks gave the Treasurer's Report with a balance of \$60,652.07 as of November 30, 2011. A motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Darwin Warsaw. Second by Aaron Warsaw. Motion carried.

Treasurer Hendricks also discussed who the \$150.00 contribution for the month of December would go to. Debbie Lammle had recommended a group called "The Storybook Project" by Lutheran Social Services of Illinois. Pastor explained the program allows inmates to electronically record personal messages and read stories to their children. Motion was made to make the December donation to "The Storybook Project" by Mike Hendricks. Second by Butch Sprau. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

- Pastor McPike said the Adult Confirmation Class will be done in January 2012. He's very pleased with the class and its progress.
- A new member reception will be held on Sunday, January 29, 2012, to welcome all new members to our congregation during the Sunday School hour. More information will be coming out soon.
- The Osman survey evaluation was discussed. Pastor has found no new shorter survey available from the Synod.
- Both Pastor McPike and Pastor Schmidt are very pleased with the setup of their Pastoral obligations at Osman. They both are committed to the future plans and the Council will revisit the arrangement on a yearly basis.
- Pastor McPike brought up the idea of a Summer Vicar from the Seminary. He has used them before. It would only be through the summer months. They would be a first year seminary student looking for some outreach and experience. The position is voluntary and informal to them and to our congregation. Housing would need to be secured. They would be expected to keep regular office hours, visit our shut-in's, and

help operate Vacation Bible School. This idea will be discussed at the Annual Quarterly Voters Meeting in January.

- The Altar Guild will buy a wardrobe cabinet and give drawings of an idea for another cabinet to Darwin Warsaw to build for other Altar items to keep.
- Pastor has updated the church website with a new "free" program that will keep an electronic storage of our congregation members and their contact information. It'll be password-protected by each family to maintain and update themselves. More information will be coming out later.

Elder's Report: No report.

Sunday School Superintendent's Report:

- The Christmas Eve Program will be held on December 24, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.
- There will be no Sunday School/Adult Bible Classes offered on Sunday, December 25, 2011.
- There will be no Sunday Confirmation Class offered on Sunday, December 25, 2011, and Sunday, January 1, 2012.
- Sunday School classes will be held on Sunday, January 1, 2012.

Trustee's Report:

Trustee Darwin Warsaw reports:

- The Annex eaves project has been completed for a cost of \$280.00, under budget by Dalton & Son.
- The additional insulation project also has been completed.
- Darwin checked on the internet company and the cost to bring internet to the church. One hundred dollar (\$100.00) install charge and either \$40.00 or \$60.00 per month, depending on what speed we want.
- The trustees need to finish some drywall repairs in the church office and the Annex for 2012.
- Darwin also reported that the Christmas tree was donated and cost \$80.00 from Tate's Trees, Champaign.

Old Business:

- The proposed 2012 budget was presented and discussed. The budget will be presented to the congregation at the Annual January Quarterly Voters Meeting.

New Business:

- Secretary Hardesty read a letter that was received by Vicar Aaron Fenker, addressed to the congregation. He thanked the congregation for the monies that were sent to

him for his schooling from our contributions to the Seminary in his name.

- The January Quarterly Voters Meeting will be held on January 8, 2012. The Council will furnish all drinks. A potluck will be held after the meeting in the Fellowship Hall.

The next Council Meeting will be on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Darwin Warsaw. Second by Aaron Warsaw. Motion carried with adjournment with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jill Hardesty, Council Secretary

Poinsettias for Christmas Eve Service

We "thank" the following members for purchasing poinsettia(s) to beautiful the altar on Christmas Eve: Larry and Esther Lutz, Butch and Shirley Sprau, Jeri Bidner, Gene and Dorothy Welborn, Karen Bryan, Marge Morrissey, Bill and Moneta McCleary, Mike and Brenda Hendricks, Don and Connie Warsaw, Marvin and Kim Clemmons (2), and John and Deb Lammle.

Christmas Thank You's

Thank you to the Sunday School children who did an awesome job presenting the Christmas message to the congregation on Christmas Eve. Thank you also to Kim Clemmons and Annette Warsaw for organizing and directing the practices. Thank you to the teachers for their support and the Youth Group members who helped with the character portrayals. Thank you, also, to Alicia Haggin for making an extra trip each week to help the children with the music.

Christmas Treat Bags

Thank you to all the members who helped pack the treat bags that were distributed on Christmas Eve. Thank you to everyone who donated money for this cause. Thank you to Connie and Donnie Warsaw for organizing this effort.

Confirmation Classes-Christmas Day and New Year's Day

Confirmation classes will not be held on December 25, 2011, (Christmas Day) and January 1, 2012, (New Year's Day). Classes will resume on January 8, 2012.

Acolyting in January

The following Confirmands will be acolyting during January:

January 01	Ryan McPike
January 08	Cheyenne Zimmerman
January 15	Mackenzie Delaney
January 22	Hannah Duncan
January 29	Chase Zimmerman

Church Council Meeting

The Church Council will meet on Tuesday, January 3, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Annex.

Annual Voters Meeting

The Annual Voters Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 8, 2012, after the worship service. Please plan on being present to discuss some of the business items and vote in the Council election. A potluck will follow the meeting in the Fellowship Hall.

Youth Group Meeting

The Youth Group will be meeting on Sunday, January 15, 2012, for a mystery night! More details will be announced at a later date but you can guarantee it will be fun!! Save the date!

Prayer Requests

If you have any prayer requests, please contact Pastor McPike or call and leave a message at the church. We will try to keep up with prayer requests, and don't want to leave anyone out, but we won't know about them unless you tell us! Also, hospitalizations will not automatically be included by pastor unless you give him specific permission (to satisfy federal privacy rules).

Office Hours for Pastor McPike

Pastor McPike has office hours after Confirmation classes every Tuesday evening after 7:00 p.m. in the Annex office. Also, Saturdays are available if anyone needs to meet with Pastor McPike, depending on his home visit's schedule. Please contact him if you need to set up an appointment.

Church Website

You can view the Church Website at <http://OsmanLutheran.org>. Weekly bulletins and monthly newsletters are listed as well as other information about our church.

Email Address for Pastor

The email address for Pastor McPike is pastor@osmanlutheran.org.

Bulletin/Recording of Worship Service for Shut-ins

If anyone is aware of shut-ins or other people who are unable to physically make it to church every week, let Esther and/or Larry Lutz know so they are included in the "Prayer List," they will receive a copy of the bulletin, and they will be given a recording of the service if they would like.

Electronic News List

An electronic news list was created to get information to Immanuel members and friends. Please send a note to OsmanNews@n9cqs.com and you will be signed up for the list. Please note, your email address will not be used for any other purpose than for this news list. If you have questions, please ask Pastor McPike.

Bulletin/Newsletter Deadlines

Bulletin Deadline. To have submissions included in Sunday's bulletin, please forward them to Karen Bryan by 12:00 noon on Thursday.

Newsletter Deadline. To have submissions included in the monthly newsletter, please forward them to Karen Bryan by 12:00 noon on the Wednesday before the last Sunday of the month.

Statistics

Date	Worship	Sunday School	Adult Class
11-27	78	11	5
12-04	80	10	6
12-11	90	12	12
12-18	78	13	6
12-24	Christmas Eve Service		
12-25	Statistics Unavailable		

Elder-on-Duty

Rob Gallier	Mar	Aug	Dec
Butch Sprau	Apr	July	Oct
Aaron Warsaw	May	Sept	Jan 2012
Shane Zimmerman	Feb	June	Nov

Altar Guild

JanuaryBarb Gaines

Lay Readers

Larry Camp01-01
 Kim Clemmons01-08
 Marvin Clemmons.....01-15
 Barb Gaines01-22
 John Gercken01-29

January Birthdays

Alma Hassebrock01-03
 Phyllis Burnett01-05

Harry Henriksen01-06
 Cindy Masko01-07
 Brad Lutz01-10
 Rebecca Gercken01-14
 Jean Amdor01-18
 Hannah Nelson01-19
 Megan Bidner01-21
 Bryce Martin01-23
 Mackenzie Homann01-26
 Matthew Burgess01-27

January Anniversary

Christie and Leonard Delaney01-07

A New Year's Prayer

*May God make your year a happy one!
 Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,
 But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;
 Not by making your path easy,
 But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
 Not by taking hardships from you,
 But by taking fear from your heart;
 Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
 But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
 Not by making your life always pleasant,
 But by showing you when people and their causes
 need you most,
 and by making you anxious to be there to help.
 God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.*

