

# The Royal Messenger

From the desk of Pastor Olsen:

## A New Season

What a blessed time in the Church Year Calendar: Advent, Christmas and Epiphany! As we begin the new calendar year for the church season, we give thanks to God for those who have gone before us to give us this gift. We often don't think of a calendar as a gift. We have been given many gifts from those who have come before us that we often do not realize or give thanks. Having this calendar helps us focus our attention away from the worldly things and onto the that which matters most, Jesus Christ and His work for our salvation.

**Advent brings us to mind the coming of the Savior, both in the incarnation and His return on the last day.** His coming in the flesh to inaugurate the end time, to bring us a hope, a light into the world, to bring us a peace that is based both on the promises of Christ fulfilled and the promises yet to come, the Day of Redemption when He returns. None of this happens if Christ does not come in the flesh to take our place, to fulfill the Law for us and to sacrifice Himself.

The full promises of God are hidden in a young mother's womb. How often we forget this and just look to the manger, but there for nine months is true God and true man! **The salvation of the world grows inside of a simple woman, who was willing to serve as she was asked.** True, the birth of the Savior brings angels and songs, shepherds and kings, but we would be amiss to not pay attention to the living God not just lying in the manger, but the one growing, as any baby does, in total helplessness and dependence upon His mother.

**This too is the joy of Christmas, that God would send His Son into such suffering, into such utter dependence.** For what is more dependent upon others than a newborn baby? It has no way to care for itself at all. If it were not for others, the baby doesn't even exist, let alone survive to the point where it can grow and care for itself as an adult. This is the way that God chose to send His Son, utter dependence and utter helplessness. The Son of God born and placed in the manger truly is one of us.

**Christmas time in the calendar, while rather short, gives us time to rejoice in this newborn king.** Helpless though He may be, He is still the Lord of heaven and earth, come down to humble Himself, born of a virgin Mary, suffer and die, to rise again on the third day for our salvation, for your salvation.

**And finally, we move into the Epiphany season, a season of wonders in the making of the manifestation of God in the flesh.** Epiphany is both a day, January 6, and a season. It is a season of light, a season of manifestation of the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. We see wise men appear to worship the child. We behold the Baptism of Jesus and end the season



with His Transfiguration on the last Sunday before the Lenten season begins. History dates Epiphany all the way back to the third century. Along with Easter and Pentecost, Epiphany was one of the highest days of the Church Year! Were that it was seen as such today. Rather, many look at it as a placeholder between Christmas and Lent.

**But here we witness the glory of the God revealed in the Word made flesh and dwelt amongst us.** The glory of God is revealed in His Baptism. The glory of God is revealed as He performs that first miracle at the wedding in Cana. And His glory is revealed on a mountain top, where He tells His disciples to tell no one what has happened in this moment of transfiguration.

**This prepares us for the glory that is to be revealed in that final week of Jesus' life through His sham of a trial, the betrayal of those closest to Him and His utter humiliation and lonesome work on the cross culminating with His death.** It was a bloody and violent end to bring peace the only way that it could have come, the lone atoning work of the Son of God for the forgiveness of sins.

So, give thanks for these upcoming, blessed seasons, *not winter and spring*, although we should be thankful for them as well. **Give thanks for the season of Advent, the season of Christmas, and the season of Epiphany, of light and the manifestation of the Son of God, the glory of the Father through the Son.**

See His glory helpless in a young woman's womb.

See the glory in the manger fit not for a king, but for animals.

See the child being brought to the temple for His circumcision.

Watch as the Holy Spirit descends from heaven and the Father speaks, "This is my Son in whom I am well pleased."

And observe the glory of Christ, if just for a moment, on a mountain with Peter, James and John as witnesses to a wonderous event.

However, it will not compare to the wonderous event on another hill far away outside the city walls. But that is for another season of the Church. **Come and see the glory of the Father through the Son and given to us with eyes of faith by the Holy Spirit. Come see the Advent of our God.**

Blessings in Christ,



Pastor Olsen



## Advent by Candlelight

We are in the season of Advent, a time to prepare for Christmas. But as women, it often feels like every moment of Advent is filled with cleaning, decorating, baking, shopping, and more in preparation for Christmas parties and celebrations.

This event though is intentional time spent in fellowship, praying, singing, and reading Scripture to prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord. We hope you can join us! Please see Lisa Kanning with any questions.

**Friday, December 5**  
**7 pm**

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***"A voice cries in the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3***

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## Cookie Fair Fundraiser

Mark your calendar for the annual Cookie Fair at on Saturday, December 13. A wonderful variety of homemade Christmas cookies, fudge, and other favorite Christmas treats will be sold for \$9.00 per pound. These homemade goodies make a wonderful gift and an easy way to do your last minute "Christmas baking"!

Free decorative tins will be available to make gift wrapping easy! In addition to the Christmas treats, we'll have Rada Cutlery and a variety of homemade jams & jelly available to purchase. Come get some delicious homemade goodies and enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee or hot chocolate!

**Saturday, December 13**  
**9 am—Noon**



## Anniversary Recap

January 1, 1900, 750 faithful members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church stepped out in faith to establish a new congregation—Emmaus Lutheran Church. They called their first pastor, built a sanctuary, and just one year later opened a Christian day school. What began as an act of bold trust in God's provision has now, by His grace, flourished for 125 years. This milestone year has been filled with joy and gratitude as we looked back at our past, gave thanks for the present, and entrusted the future to the Lord's guiding hand.

### Looking to the Past

We started our 125th anniversary celebration with a nod to the past with Emmaus member Rev. Dr. Jon Bruss, CTSFW President, as our guest preacher. During Bible class, longtime member Mr. Bill Bradley shared an interesting presentation on the storied history of Emmaus; a wonderful reminder of the faith and sacrifice of those who came before us.

### Enjoying the Present

In August, our church and school families gathered for a combined picnic. We donned our special 125th anniversary T-shirts as we enjoyed fellowship, delicious food, and fun under the sun. In September, Rev. Ben Ball served as our guest preacher and helped us focus on God's blessings today. During that service we gratefully dedicated a beautiful new processional cross, made possible by your generous anniversary gifts and memorial donations.

### Trusting the Future to God

We closed the year's celebrations in November with former Emmaus fieldworker Rev. Gunnar Campbell preaching on the sure hope we have in Christ. A highlight of the service was reinstalling the congregation's original marble baptismal font as a permanent and meaningful part of our worship space, tying yesterday's heritage to tomorrow's ministry. Through every chapter of our history, from 1900 to today, we see the Lord's abundant faithfulness. Emmaus has played a vital role in the growth of confessional Lutheranism in Fort Wayne, and we are excited to see all that He has planned for the years ahead.

**To God alone be the glory!**

125  
YEARS  
1900 - 2025



## Board of Finance Update

As we close out the calendar year, we want to thank everyone for their support of Emmaus as tithing continues to increase over last year (+21%). But we thank you not only for your financial support, but also for all everyone does to make Emmaus a very special Church, School and Pre-School.

We will be restarting the Financial Townhall meetings in January, just check the weekly News & Notes for the date. Also, please let me know prior to the meeting if there is anything specific you would like to have addressed.



Thank you!  
Gregg Kiess, Treasurer

## Women's Guild Update

First, we want to say a very sincere THANK YOU to all our Emmaus family for your wonderful support for our **kringles** fundraiser. At this writing, we have a few pastries left from the 144 ordered! It was a very successful venture for us.

Second, it is time to get ready for our annual **Cookie Fair!** NOW is the time to get out your favorite holiday recipes and purchase the needed ingredients. The **disposable cookie pans will be distributed on Sundays, November 30 and December 7**. All day Friday, Dec. 12 will be the cookie delivery day to the church office until 4:00pm. If that doesn't work for you, the cookies can be delivered on Sat. morning by 8:30am. The sale will run on Saturday, Dec. 13 from 9:00am until noon. Flyers will be included in News & Notes those two previous Sundays. Spread the word -- we need shoppers, too!

Lastly, if you are free on **January 14 at 9:00 am**, please come to our **next regular Guild meeting**. At that meeting, we will be doing our annual funding allocations for recurring bills that we pay, and we hope we raise enough dollars to do some extra allocations to our church, school, and preschool. You will see those results in the February newsletter.

Once again, thank you for your support.  
Barb Kanning, Secretary



## Letter from the Principal

Dear Emmaus Congregation,

As the days grow shorter and the weather cooler, the atmosphere at Emmaus Lutheran School is buzzing with activity and festive spirit! We are so excited to share what's happening and invite you to be a part of these special events.

Classrooms are filled with the sounds of discovery, collaboration, and learning. Our dedicated teachers are working hard to provide engaging lessons across all subjects, ensuring our students are challenged and nurtured in a Christ-centered environment.

**Special Friends Day**, where students welcome their grandparents, relatives, or special friends to join them for a morning of activities, classroom visits, and a special chapel service. It's a highlight of the year where we celebrate the bonds of friendship and family that strengthen our community.

The basketball season is in full swing! Our **student-athletes** in various grades are practicing hard and competing with great sportsmanship and enthusiasm. Come out to cheer on our Emmaus teams! Your support from the stands means the world to our young athletes.

The PTLs annual **Candy Cane Lane** event! On December 9-12, the school will transform into a winter wonderland where students can shop for inexpensive gifts for family members in a safe and supervised environment. It's a wonderful way for our students to experience the joy of giving.

The highlight of the season for many are our **Christmas programs**, where students share the joyous message of Christ's birth. Please join us for these heartwarming events:

- ◆ Kindergarten through 4th Grade Christmas Program

Date: Monday, December 8th

Time: 6:00 PM

- ◆ 5th through 8th Grade Christmas Program

Date: Tuesday, December 16th

Time: 6:30 PM

**Come and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with songs, scripture, and delightful performances by our students.**

We are incredibly grateful for the support and prayers of our entire Emmaus congregation. Your partnership is vital to the success of our school and the spiritual development of our students. We wish everyone a blessed Thanksgiving and a very Merry Christmas!

**In His Service,**

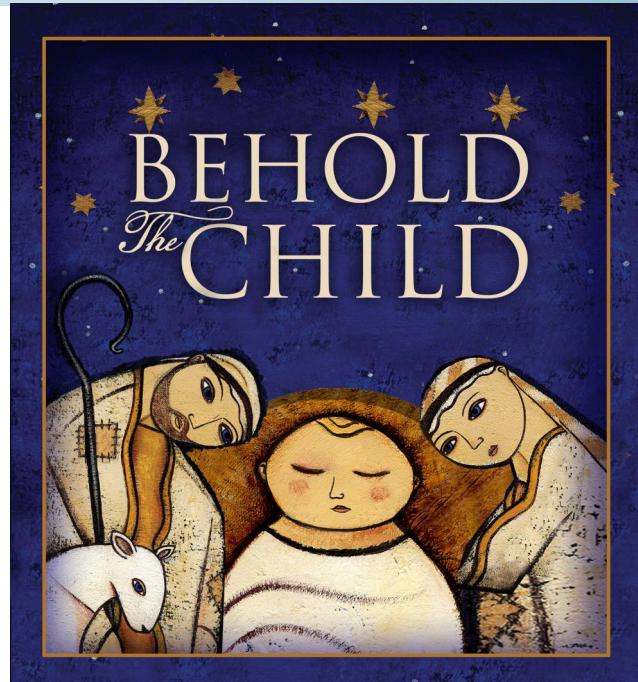
Esther Spanos, Principal

Emmaus Lutheran School

## Advent Series

Join us this season as we explore the "Behold the Child" theme. The good news of Christ's birth is both universal and personal. The angel proclaims that Christ's birth is "good news of great joy . . . for all the people" (Luke 2:10). The heavenly host builds upon that by declaring that Christ's advent brings "peace among men" to make it known that Christ comes to save all.

**Midweek Advent Services**  
**Dec. 3, 10, 17 at 7 pm**



## UPCOMING EMMAUS EVENTS

Dec. 3	Midweek Advent Service at 7 pm
Dec. 5	Advent by Candlelight at 7 pm
Dec. 8	K-4 Christmas Program at 6 pm
Dec. 10	Midweek Advent Service at 7 pm
Dec. 10-12	Candy Cane Lane Christmas Store
Dec. 13	Cookie Fair from 9 am to 12 pm
Dec. 13	Preschool Christmas Program at 4 pm
Dec. 14	Sunday School Christmas Party
Dec. 16	Grades 5-8 Christmas Program at 6:30 pm
Dec. 17	Midweek Advent Service at 7 pm
Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Christmas Break—No School
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Service at 7 pm
Dec. 25	Christmas Day Service at 9 am

## Preschool News



November and December are busy, busy months in Preschool! We had **Doughnuts with Dad** where we enjoyed yummy Jack's doughnuts, lots of fun crafts and games. We ended our morning with Pastor Olsen where both the dads and the kids were reminded that we don't just have earthly Fathers but a Heavenly Father who loves us so much! We were thankful for the time we had showing our Dads what we learn in Preschool each day.

**Our last day before Thanksgiving Break we were finally able to go outside on our new playground!** We started out with a Playground Blessing where Pastor Olsen prayed with us and dedicated our playground to God's glory! Then the playing began! Happy faces on both the kids and the teachers were present even though it was very, very wet and muddy! A huge thank you to Gregg Keiss who helped us every step of the way in this long and very frustrating project!

A huge **THANK YOU** also to all of you who bought numerous chicken dinners and attended the last two school auctions to make this happen. We now have a "preschool-safe" playground which is truly a blessing!

**Saturday, December 13 at 4:00 p.m. the preschool children and Pastor Olsen will be presenting A Mixed-Up Christmas musical.** It's a fun program where the children show Pastor Olsen that he has the Christmas Story mixed-up! The children are working hard on their lines and learning the songs so that they can share Jesus' birth with their families. Be sure to join us to watch and meet our Preschool families and invite them to church on Christmas!

**In Christ,**  
Joann Olsen, Preschool Director

## Make your own Christmas Ornament

1. Color the angel.
2. Cut it out with scissors.
3. Punch a hole in the top.
4. Tie a piece of yarn or ribbon through the hole
5. Hang it on your Christmas tree.



**Just for KIDS**



Magi-Wise Men from the east followed the star to Bethlehem. They went to worship the "King of the Jews" ... Jesus.

"Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh."

Matthew 2:11

**The magi gave the best they had as gifts to Jesus. What can you give to Him?**

Find the letters in each pile that are not covered by another. Unscramble them to find something to give to Jesus. Check your answers in your Bible.

**Answers:**

Psalm 100:4 THANKS; John 13:34 LOVE; Exodus 15:2 PRAISE.

NUA VDA  
O SK I  
H Z T

LPQ SZE  
V T O

b SWA  
E P B  
F S E  
K R Z

Psalm 100:4

John 13:34

Exodus 15:2



# END OF YEAR *Giving*

**30% of charitable contributions  
occur at the end of the year.**

*If you want to keep your dollars close to home,  
here are a few options.*

## **Support-A-Student**

Make a direct impact with a donation to this Emmaus program. It serves students with much needed financial support; giving them an opportunity to attend Emmaus and receive a Christ-centered education.

## **Emmaus Endowment**

Right now, this fund benefits with a **double match** from the Lutheran Foundation! This fund directly supports the school and its operating costs.

## **LSGO**

Lutheran Scholarship Granting Organization (LSGO) is a program that allows individuals and businesses to reduce or eliminate their state taxes by funding scholarships for families wanting a quality, Christian education. Donors receive a 50% state tax CREDIT up to their total state tax liability. To learn more, go to [www.lutheransgo.org](http://www.lutheransgo.org) and click on the DONOR tab.

*Contact Gregg Kiess or Jamelyn Rigdon for more information.*

# Annual Cookie Fair

**Saturday, December 13, 2025**

**9:00 a.m. - Noon**

**Homemade cookies** (Christmas and all-time favorites) and **fudge** will be sold for \$9.00/lb. Other goodies for sale include jams, Turtle-flavored Kringles, and Rada cutlery.

These treats make a wonderful gift and an easy way to **do your last minute “Christmas baking”**.

**Free decorative Christmas tins** will be available so you can easily pack and wrap your cookies and give them as a gift!

**Emmaus Lutheran Church  
School & Preschool  
8626 Covington Road  
Fort Wayne, IN**



## 2025-2026 Officers, Board Chairmen & Head Elders of Emmaus Lutheran Church

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**Vice President:**

*Bill Bradley*

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*Dr. David Reichwage*

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*Stacey Durlacher*

**Board of Elders:**

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**Board of Christian Education:**

*Jessica Barkdull*

**Board of Finance:**

*Gregg Kiess*

**Board of Parish Publicity & Promotion:**

*Member-led*

**Board of Properties:**

*{Vacant}*

**Emmaus School Board:**

*Paul Stockinger, Acting Chairman*

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PLACE  
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