



December 2022/January 2023



First Lutheran Church  
240 W. Hardanger Gate  
Lee, IL 60530  
815.824.2356

# The Parish Voice

A NEWSLETTER OF HEART OF ILLINOIS LUTHERAN

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
398 Church Road  
Compton, IL 61318  
815.539.6567

## HOILP Holiday Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve will once again be highlighted by candlelight services at both congregations of HOILP. Join us at either location as we celebrate the birth of our Lord together.

Our Christmas Day service will also serve as our Sunday morning service this year as December 25<sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday. We will have one service at Immanuel at the traditional Christmas Day time.

**Christmas Eve**  
Saturday, December 24  
7:00 p.m. Immanuel  
9:00 p.m. First

**Christmas Day**  
Sunday, December 25  
10:00 a.m. Immanuel

**New Year's Day**  
Sunday, January 1  
10:30 a.m. First

New Year's Day also falls on a Sunday. We'll be having a joint service on that day as well – 10:30 a.m. at First.

The normal worship schedule will resume with an Epiphany Sunday worship on Sunday, January 8, 2023.

## HOILP Food Swap

The December Food Swap date of December 18<sup>th</sup> will be a Christmas Cookie Swap. Bring small plates of your favorite Christmas cookies/bars/ desserts to the food swap. After the service, come back and swap a scrumptious looking dessert back to your house.

A reminder that, although only fresh, canned or dry good items can be taken to the pantries, everyone is encouraged to bring those and/or frozen, preserved, canned items to the swap. Also, we encourage for all food swap events that if you know of specific families in need to bag up any of the times to take to them directly. Everyone is able to participate in the swap and anyone can take leftover items once the swap is finished. Those items that can't go to a pantry, we ask that you take back home with you.

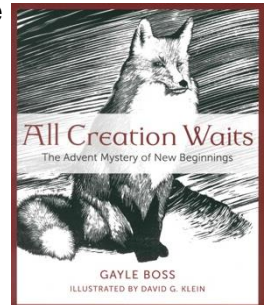
Thank you for your participation.

**January 22 will be Soup Day. Details will be shared in weekly announcements.**

## Advent Daily Devotions

The last two years the HOILP worship team has worked hard to provide Wednesday Advent online worship opportunities. This year, rather than produce our own services, the worship teams encourages you to take advantage of the Northern Illinois Synod daily devotions.

These devotions, being produced by a task force of the Creation Care Committee which Pastor Jeff is leading, will feature pastor's and congregations from all over the synod. Featuring a reading and illustration from the book "All Creation Waits" by a rostered leader of the synod, a song led by one of the congregations of the synod, and prayers and blessings offered by yet another rostered, each video will be 9-11 minutes long. They promise to provide inspirational experiences that will prepare you for the celebration of Christ's arrival in the manger.



The videos can most easily be accessed by subscribing to the synod's YouTube channel – [www.youtube.com/nisynod](http://www.youtube.com/nisynod) and via other synod social media. But links will be provided on the Facebook pages of HOILP and hopefully on our websites in order to make them easy to access.

## Sunday School Returns!!

With the start of the new church year, Sunday School will be returning to Immanuel. At the leadership of Kathy Ross and Kim Menzel, we will gather weekly following worship at Immanuel. Check out page two of the newsletter for full details.

## Sunday School Is Returning to Immanuel On Sunday, December 4!



**When: Every Sunday after 8:30 AM Church  
Service (Approx. 9:30-10:15 AM)**

**Where: Downstairs at Immanuel**

**Who: Preschoolers-Eighth Graders**

**In December, we will be learning more about  
Christmas through stories, music, crafts, and  
games. Snacks will be provided.  
(No class on Christmas Day and New Year's Day).**

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## Worship

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### **Readers at Immanuel & First**

Have you ever thought about being a reader for our Sunday worship services?

***New readers are always welcome!***

Contact Debbie at Immanuel or Kristen at First if you are interested.

Immanuel's schedule for 2023 will be made up soon!

### **Ushers & Bell Ringers at Immanuel**

With the new church year we will be putting together an usher schedule at Immanuel. If you are willing to help, please let Debbie know so that we can include you on the schedule. Also, bell ringers will be included on that schedule, if you are a seasoned bell ringer or would like to learn, please let her know.

# This and That

## **N.I.C.E. Center Update**

- Food/Miscellaneous Items Needed – BBQ sauce, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, bags of flour & sugar, boxed potatoes, canned soup, marshmallows, and instant coffee, canned tuna, spaghetti's, hamburger helper, paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex, dish soap, laundry soap.
- For the Christmas Room they are asking for crayons, coloring books, kids pajamas, size infant to 5T. The Christmas Room will be open Dec. 3, 10, 17, 24.
- We need help for food pickups in DeKalb on Friday mornings (leave N.I.C.E. at 7:20 a.m.) and/or help sort produce and other food items at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call Dave Koroscik at 815-751-0401.

Thank you for your continued support for the N.I.C.E. Center.

## **First Lutheran Council Highlights** **November 18, 2022**

- First Lutheran will contribute \$250 toward Sunshine Meals for people in need, to be prepared & frozen at Immanuel, and delivered as needed.
- After discussion with the mowing company, we will continue with the current mowing company at the same rate for 2023.
- Air conditioners will need to be replaced, we are looking into options.
- Jan./Feb. benevolence will go to PADS Homeless Shelter in Peru, IL

## **Benevolence Offerings**

**Immanuel:** Dec. – Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). Jan. – Local Outreach. Please use the envelope found in this newsletter.

**First:** Dec. – Barb City Manor, DeKalb. Jan. - PADS Homeless Shelter, Peru. Please use the benevolence box at church or designate it on the memo line of your check.

*A Friendly Reminder to members of Immanuel to "receive communion and make a financial contribution of record" before December 27, 2022 to remain as an active and voting member.*

**Immanuel's 2023 Weekly Offering Envelopes, calendars, and Church Directory are now available. Please pick yours up today!**

## **Immanuel Council Highlights** **November 17, 2022**

- General Treasury ending balance October 31, 2022 is \$4,371.30
- Shrubs around church trimmed by Ekana Nursery
- Sunday School will begin Sunday, December 4
- Discussion on getting people back to church and getting new council members
- Set Annual Meeting date – Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023
- Endowment Fund disbursements to:
  - \$1,000 to M.A.S.S.
  - \$2,000 to P.A.D.S.
  - \$1,000 to Horizon House
  - \$1,000 to Kreider Services

## **Joint Council Highlights** **November 18, 2022**

- The Parish Team presented a couple of proposals before the joint-council. Additional rewording of the Parish Covenant was passed, particular to how a Parish Meeting can be called.
- The joint-council approved the addition of a Sabbatical Policy to the Parish Covenant.
- Rev. Schlesinger presented his request for a Sabbatical from May 16-August 14, 2023. After some discussion, this was approved. During the Sabbatical, the pastor will rest, travel, and not be contacted for any pastoral needs.
- A Sabbatical team will be formed to consider how the congregations will each handle the pastoral duties during Rev. Schlesinger's absence.
- The pastoral compensation package was increased for the 2023 budget.

## **Immanuel Church Office Hours**

Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
Church office: 815-539-6567

*Debbie will be available from home in the afternoons. If you need anything, call or text: 815-866-6690 or email: [immanuelutherancompton@live.com](mailto:immanuelutherancompton@live.com).*

## **HOILP on the Internet**

### **Websites & Facebook**

First – [www.flcinlee.com](http://www.flcinlee.com)

[www.facebook.com/firstlutheranchurchlee](https://www.facebook.com/firstlutheranchurchlee)

Immanuel – [www.ilccompton.org](http://www.ilccompton.org)

[www.facebook.com/ilccompton](https://www.facebook.com/ilccompton)



[www.youtube.com/@hoilp](https://www.youtube.com/@hoilp)

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# WELCA

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## **JUSTICE (Mission Action) – Charlene Zimmerman**

What does the Lord require of you but to do *justice*, love kindness and walk humbly with your God. (*Micah 6:8*)

It's the Holidays. Let's flood N.I.C.E. with the items they need: BBQ sauce, ketchup, mustard, mayo, bags of flour & sugar, boxed potatoes, canned soup, marshmallows, instant coffee, canned tuna, spaghetti's, hamburger helper, paper towels, toilet paper, kleenex, dish soap, laundry soap.

For the Christmas Room at N.I.C.E. they are looking for crayons, coloring books, kids pajamas, size infant to 5T. The Christmas Room will be open Dec. 3, 10, 17, 24.

Please put your donations in the totes in the room next to the office. Thank you.

## **WELCA President's Desk – Sarah Pfeifer**

Still available are Immanuel's Cookbooks – old (125<sup>th</sup> anniversary) & new (2007) - \$5.00 each and Immanuel's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Christmas Ornament - \$2.00. They make great Christmas gifts! (see Debbie in the church office.) Greta Bates is the new WELCA-NIS representative for our Central Conference.

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## Parish Team

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### **November Meeting Notes**

The HOILP Parish Team met on November 9 at First Lutheran. A final edit review was made of the Parish Covenant documents updates, and the Team approved the Covenant to be presented to the Joint Council at the November 20 meeting. A final review was made of the Parish Sabbatical Policy document, and the Team approved the proposed Policy to be presented to the Joint Council at the November meeting. Pr. Jeff's Sabbatical Proposal was reviewed, and the Team endorsed the proposal to be presented to the Joint Council at the November meeting. The Team reviewed the progress of the Joint Mission Service Projects: 1) Sunshine Meals (see info on right) Members of both congregations are sought to continue this ministry. 2) Food Swap events took place throughout the summer; the last will be November 20. A Christmas Cookie Swap is planned for December 18. January 22 will be Soup Day; details will be shared in newsletters and weekly announcements. Thank You's were expressed to John Holzer and Rita Thompson whose terms on the Parish Team will be completed with the annual meetings. One new representative is sought from each congregation for a 3-year term on the Parish Team.

### **Lasagna for "Sunshine Meals"**

Nine Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish members worked together recently to assemble twelve pans of lasagna. This pasta along with salad and garlic bread are available to give to members of our communities or congregations who are sick, returning home from the hospital or just need a "perk me up". If you know of anyone who could use a ray of sunshine in their lives, give Debbie at Immanuel a call or if it is after office ours, contact Pastor Jeff.

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## Jeff's Jottings

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October 11<sup>th</sup> marked the seventh anniversary for me as pastor of Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish. Technically, it marked the seventh anniversary of being pastor of First Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran, since HOILP didn't even exist when I first started as your pastor. Which transitions nicely into my next point.

We've experienced many things together since that time. Among them, of course, is the formation of HOILP, a shared ministry of our congregations in which we journey together as companions in ministry as we go forth proclaiming the good news of Jesus. We have shared worship and meals together, worked on new ministries and events together such as Bible month and BLAST, and of course navigated the tumultuous waters of a global pandemic together on these two little lifeboats named Immanuel Lutheran and First Lutheran. It has been an exciting and eventful trip.

Last March, I asked the joint meeting of the councils if they would consider offering a sabbatical to me in 2023. Sabbaticals for pastors have been around for a long time, but are only offered on a congregation by congregation basis. They are designed to offer a long term pastor a chance for rest and renewal to reinvigorate her/his ministry and thus benefit both the pastor and congregation. I explained that after 24 years as a pastor, I'd never had a time period when I wasn't Pastor Jeff. Short vacations here and there yes. But even on my days off when I run an errand to the hardware store, I'm Pastor Jeff while there. I told the councils that as I look at retirement in seven or eight years, a chance to regenerate would help keep me fresh through those years. The councils saw value in it and tasked the Parish Team with exploring and presenting those options.

Last month, the parish team presented a policy to the joint councils to guide current and future sabbaticals for pastors of HOILP. In addition, I presented a proposal for a sabbatical for myself in 2023. There was a lot of good and healthy discussion regarding the concept. There was also a lot of good and healthy discussion regarding approving a sabbatical for me. I'm pleased that both the policy and my sabbatical were approved. Incidentally, neither of them were approved unanimously. And that's quite alright. For it is something new, and it includes both time and financial commitment on behalf of the parish.

I see it as a privilege to be offered a sabbatical, not something I have a right to. I consider being awarded a sabbatical by the congregation as a sign of trust and commitment by HOILP to me as it's pastor, and that it expresses the parish's desire to maintain that relationship and keep it strong. Though the sabbatical comes partly as a result of my years of service (both to the ELCA and to HOILP), I don't see it as something I've earned, but an investment in our future. I share the same trust and commitment to HOILP and look forward to what new things might arise for us following this sabbatical.

Over the coming months, I will be making plans for my activities for that sabbatical. They will revolve around the three-fold recommendation by the synod for sabbatical leaves: personal time, family time, and continuing ed/study time.

Also over the coming months, a sabbatical team will be formed and working to put things in place to cover my pastoral duties during my absence. If you are interested in being part of that team, let the council at your congregation know.

There is much more that can be said regarding a sabbatical. Look for additional information in the months to come.

Seven years ago I arrived thinking I would be here for only a couple years while I finished my dissertation. But the Holy Spirit had other ideas. I fell in love with this place and the ministry here. And apparently you all liked me enough to keep me around. I am deeply appreciative of the confidence and commitment HOILP is making in me and look forward to what the years ahead have in store for us as parish and pastor.

See you in worship on Sunday!

PS

**Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
398 Church Rd. - Compton, IL 61318**

(First Lutheran - 240 W. Hardanger Gate - Lee, IL 60530)

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Organization  
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**Return Service Requested**

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

December 4 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
December 11 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
December 18 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
December 25 – Immanuel (10:00)

January 1 – First (10:30)  
January 8 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
January 15 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
January 22 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)  
January 29 – Immanuel (8:30) First (10:30)

## **Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish**

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You can also check us out on Facebook!