



December 1, 2017

Greetings friends,

As is the case with most years, I'm hearing conflicting reports about the kind of weather we'll be enjoying this winter. Some say it will be relatively mild as we've experienced the last few years. Others maintain it's going to be a tough one with VERY COLD TEMPERATURES and heavy precipitation. I get it. No one really knows for sure. They see trends with the jet stream and el nina/nino influences and make educated guesses. I'm thinking the climatologists don't put too much stock in the coats of woolly caterpillars or squirrels or of those squirrel's nut stashes. But, really, sometimes predictions based on the habits of wild creatures seem as accurate as anything else.

Here's how we handle the uncertainty. We prepare. We know winter is coming to the Midwest so we have plenty of warm winter clothing that we can layer on or off depending on the conditions of the day. We keep our thermostat set at a comfortable temperature in our homes and we adjust it as conditions dictate. The eaves of our houses have been cleaned and the yard work is done. We have our snow blower, shovel, and ice chipper conveniently located.

Our cars have been equipped with ice scrapers and antifreeze. We feel like we are ready, come what may.

As the Jews looked forward to the arrival of the long-awaited King nearly 2000 years ago. Isaiah had prophesized His Coming, but no one knew exactly when it would happen and few expected He would come as a babe into such humble circumstances. Still, there were a few who were waiting and ready to meet and accept Him however he arrived, whenever he arrived. They prepared for Jesus in hope and faith.

Now we're anticipating Jesus' Second Coming. We read the signs described in the Bible and compare them to the realities we are seeing in our world. But, God in His wisdom does not give the exact date and time. He wants us to prepare by choosing to live our lives as He would have us do. He wants to encourage us to study His Word, build our lives on His promises and share our faith in Him with others. No one on earth really knows when Jesus is coming again or what exactly His Coming will look like. So the faithful prepare by inviting Jesus into our lives. We confess our sins and ask for forgiveness. We reach out to others and share our beliefs and invite them to meet Jesus, too. As we prepare our bodies and circumstances for whatever season comes next, so too should we prepare our hearts for the coming of our Lord. Our faith and our hope lead us follow His Word so that we are ready, come what may.

***"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Matthew 24:36***

***You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." Luke 12:40***

**This Week at Grace** – This Sunday we begin our celebration of Advent. Pastor Fred's message this week, "Therefore, Keep Awake" is inspired by Mark 13:24-37. Our choir is preparing several wonderful songs for us in December. This first one, *Bring Us Hope* tells of our anticipation for the

coming of Jesus. Alyssa Loots and her family will serve as Advent Candle lighters and they will also have their son, Korbin, baptized. We will celebrate Communion. Cathy Hermanson is our liturgist this week with Mike & Patsy Jensen and Alex & Amy Franco serving as greeters. Dale & Lynn Henricks and Duane & Sharon Matson will be acting as ushers. As always, worship begins at 9:15. Following our worship service, you're invited to help decorate the church for Christmas – no coffee fellowship this week. Sunday school program practice begins at 10:15 in Fellowship Hall. It will be a busy morning – please come and take part in the fun!

**Baked Goods needed!** The Bethany Life Volunteers are hosting their annual Bake Sale/Craft Sale on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. We need donated baked goods to sell that day. If you have a bit of spare time to bake some brownies or cookies, a cake, pie or bars, please drop them off to the front desk at Bethany Life on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, before 7 PM. Thank you SO much for supporting our residents and tenants.

**Angel Tree gifts** wrapped and tagged with the wish list slip are due at Immanuel Church by Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

**If you haven't yet turned in your bright green pledge card for 2018**, please do so at your earliest convenience. You may place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning or get it to the church office. Thank you!

**\*See notices for events at neighbor churches this weekend on page 3.\***

**As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer:**  
Family of Al Rau; Natalie Tryon; Denny Michel; Sara Dappen; Julie Jacobson; Sharon Matson; Norman Patti; Pam Hillis; Jeanne Hohneke; Ray Hults; Lois Johnson; Cooper Leeman; Taylor family in Africa mission

## **News You Can Use**

### **Sunday, December 3 – First Sunday of Advent**

9:15 AM Worship – Baptism. choir sings, Communion  
10:15 AM Hanging of the Greens – NO Coffee Fellowship  
10:15 AM Sunday school program practice – in Fellowship Hall

### **Wednesday, December 6**

7:00 PM Choir  
8:00 PM Bells

### **Sunday, December 10**

8:00 AM Trustees  
9:15 AM Worship – Jerry Spencer leads, Bells play  
10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship  
10:30 AM Sunday school program practice

**Faithfully,  
Cathy**

*We're doing the baking for you!*

# Holiday Cookie Walk

**December 2, 2017 | 9 a.m.–12 noon**  
**St. Petri Church, 804 Grand, Story City**

*Cookies, candies, gift jar mixes, and  
crafts will be available.*

**SAINT PETRI EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**



## **Immanuel Lutheran Church's Christmas Luncheon and Bake Sale** **Saturday, December 2 from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.**

**Menu includes:** variety of soups, bread, rice pudding, Scandinavian treats and a Hot Chocolate Bar. \$10 for full meal or \$5 for dessert/drink only.

*There will also be a bake sale featuring Scandinavian Baked Goods.*

Make it a day and enjoy the Tour of Homes and visit the local shops!