

Immanuel United Church of Christ

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

JANUARY 2022 Newsletter

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What my duck told me...

On our homestead down near Blanchardville (this was a few years ago), we had five ducks—four ducks and a drake, to be precise. They were kinda fun to watch waddling around the yard, but they weren't good for much else. They never laid eggs where I could find them, and they hated to go into the coop at night. So I was always having to herd them in after dark. Herd five ducks and they will go off in six different directions—none being the one you want, of course.

Anyway, one night, just before Christmas, one of my ducks went missing. Night time on the farm is fraught with danger. Coyotes and raccoons lurk about. I was sad, but not surprised.

Then, about a week later, as I was shutting in the animals at sunset, I just happened to look behind a piece of plywood leaning against the coop. There sat my missing duck—keeping 8 or 10 eggs warm in a nest hollowed out of the gravel and generously lined with down from her own breast.

I didn't know ducks could go broody in the middle of winter, though with the crazy mild weather we were having that year I really wasn't too surprised. So I said to her, "Duck! what are you thinking!"

Outside the safety of the duck house night after night, her prospects were none too good. The nights were cold, and any day might have turned drastically colder. January ducklings don't have a high survival rate.

She looked up at me and peeped. Her beady little eyes said, "Yeah? What's your point?"

So there she sat in the cold and dark—confident, in a ducky sort of way, that she was right where she was supposed to be; trusting, in her ducky way, that everything would turn out—just ducky.

Was she afraid? I don't know. She should have been.

And right there, in that odd display of trust and uncertainty, you have the Christmas story.

Young Mary in Bethlehem—far from the safety of her own home and the comfort of her own mother, holed up in a dark corner of a cold barn. Something momentous is stirring inside her.

Her prospects are none too good. Palestine was at least as cold and heartless a place for a poor, young person in the 1st century as it is today—maybe more so. There were no friends; there were plenty of enemies.

Soon the young family would become homeless refugees fleeing Herod's sword—crossing the border into a foreign land, reaching for safety, hoping they would be let in.

Do you think, maybe, she was a little afraid? Do you think, maybe, she should have been?

We are almost through the four weeks of darkness we call Advent—a miniature of the darkness we spend most of our lives stumbling through.

Four weeks of darkness is enough already. Christmas Eve is almost here. The light we've been watching from a dim distance is shining brighter. This morning isn't so dark.

Nothing else can do that, you know.

Only the light.

Only love can overcome fear. Only generosity can overcome anger. Only kindness can overcome hate. Only light can overcome darkness.

Fear and terror. These are very real, very dark forces. They will rule the world. They will rule us—until we are embraced by the gift of Christmas; until the light that shone in the Bethlehem stable shines around us.

The world may be a dark and fearful place. But that is never the whole story.

See how the light shines—the light that changes everything.

That will change the world.

And us.

Let it shine.

And do not be afraid.

Blessings,
Brad Brookins



CHURCH COUNCIL

The December Church Council meeting was held on December 15, 2021. Present at the meeting were: MEMBERS: Roy Berrey, JoAnn Geissbuhler, Roy Hardt, Fritz Hirsbrunner, Brandi Ruf-Wepking, Sheila Siegler, Jean Stauffacher, Dave Sutherland, Randy Ubersox, Pastor Brad Brookins. Absent Matt Ubersox.

Review and Repair of the Agenda – nothing new to add.
The November Minutes were approved as presented.

Reports

Financial Report was approved as presented.

Pastor Report: worship committee meeting yesterday, Christmas Eve service is all set. Women's service – Judy would like someone else to take this over. JoAnn suggested we put word out seeking a volunteer or group of women to do this. An email would be

best to reach everyone in the body of members. Brad will also mention in church this coming Sunday. Covid numbers and cases are on the rise in Lafayette Co. Discussed mask wearing inside the church. We will continue to offer masks in sanctuary. Brad will evaluate his comfort level with in-person service as numbers continue to rise.

President Report: JoAnn received pamphlets from Upland Hills Health on Transforming Greif. She placed them on the back table in the sanctuary. Thank you received from Team Rubicon for our gift to them for the Afghanistan Refugee's.

Darlington Police Department is asking for donations for shop for a cop. JoAnn will reach out to Deb Loken and Jared Reuter see who has done this in the past.

Darlington Main Street group has approached us to become a member. In the past we have not joined this. Group discussed the need to have a better community presence. We will invite the new director from the Main Street organization to come to a council meeting to discuss the benefits of joining.

Christian Education Committee: Brandi and Roy Berrey are working together on a Christmas program for the kids.

Building and Grounds Committee: Thermostat replacement for fellowship hall that is more user friendly was recommended. Hastert's has been contacted.

Stewardship Committee: Ornaments to be given out on Christmas Eve.

EF & G Committee: Looking for things to do or projects. Jean will contact committee to see if they send out Christmas cards or make phone calls to shut ins.

Woman's Guild: Christmas party last Thursday. Success! Envelopes for giving instead of bazaar due to Covid.

Worship Committee: discussed many options for congregation involvement such as leading services, Bible study, special music, scripture reading etc. Council approved bringing hymnals back into sanctuary.

Search Committee: Few candidates out there as well as trouble finding someone interested in Immanuel in Darlington.

Old Business:

Strategic Planning (Fritz): By-laws are ready for Annual Report.

Investment decision Roy Berrey: suggests we poll members present at the Annual Meeting of their comfort level with a more risky investment or more secure investment. Fritz will present to the membership at the Annual Meeting the findings of the investment options. The council will take this into account when making the final decision for the investments. Item tabled until next meeting.

New Business:

Budget Approval (Fritz): went over the budget for 2022. Council approved the budget as presented.

Nominating Committee Update: Dave Sutherland gave an update that Kerry Black agreed to join council replacing Roy Hardt and Nancy Slama will replace Matt Ubersox

on his last 2 years of service. Fritz Hirsbrunner and Connie Ubersox are willing to be on the Stewardship Committee replacing Kerry Black and Ann Reuter.

Annual Meeting: is January 30.

Reports for Meeting: available to members 2 weeks prior to meeting-Jan 17th.

Meeting immediately after to approve Officers for 2022.

The next Council meeting will be on January 19, 2022 at 6:15 p.m.



THANK YOU!

I would like to thank the following people who were so kind to volunteer to be the liturgist for this past year. If I missed someone I apologize.

Betsy Wiegel
Marjean Sutherland
Joann Geissbuhler
Scott Glendenning
Sheila Siegler
Abby Reuter
Fritz Hirsbrunner
Janice Ruf
Rodney Lindell

Pam Hardt
Dave Sutherland
Jared Reuter
Joanne Merriam
Brandi Wepking
Judy Huntington
Roy Berrey
Amy Ruegsegger
Tana Risseuw

Thank you all for your help.
Joan Blaser



ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting date will be January 30, 2022 after worship. Please have any articles to Nancy Slama by January 10, 2022, as the Annual Report needs to be done by January 17, 2022 so it can be attached to the website and so the congregation has time to review it before the meeting. There will be a few copies

of the Annual Report will be left on the Fellowship Hall table right in front of the door on January 17, 2022 for anyone who does not have access to the church website. You can contact Nancy Slama at 608-482-2859 or quinn.nancy@ymail.com by January 17, 2022 to have a copy of the Annual Report mailed to you.



WOMEN'S GUILD

The Women's Guild had a very nice Christmas Party on December 8th, the food was delicious and even better than the food was the wonderful fellowship we shared with each other. Our plan is to resume our regular monthly meetings in March with a light lunch

and some type of program. If anyone has any ideas, you can contact one of the guild officers.

Everyone have a happy and healthy new year.

Debbie Loken
Women's Guild President



CHURCH HISTORY IN PICTURES

The EF&G Committee put together a wonderful history of our Church with pictures. These were put on DVD's and were available to all members. With the changing times, we thought it was a good idea to preserve them to the web

since DVD's are starting to not be available. These have all been put into computer files and uploaded to our YouTube Channel. They can be found at the following link:

https://studio.youtube.com/channel/UCIZV_0Bj-N2YIHEbrWq-csw/playlists. You can also search for IUCC Darlington on YouTube or find the link on our website.

Thanks to everyone who helped put these together especially Betty Williams. They are so enjoyable and will keep our history available to all.



PASTORAL CARE

If you know of any church member that would appreciate a pastoral visit, please let Janice Ruf know and she will follow up with the contact, or contact Pastor Brad Brookins at 608-669-2926.



**Have a safe, prosperous &
happy 2022
everyone!**



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Jan. 10th – DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL REPORT
ARTICLES**

Jan. 19th – Church Council Meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Jan. 24th – Deadline for February newsletter articles

Jan. 30th – Annual Meeting after worship



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 nd	Ann Reuter
3 rd	June Hancock Elizabeth Reuter
7 th	Lisa Reilly
8 th	Richard Ubersox
10 th	Judy Huntington
12 th	Harlow Johnson
13 th	John Gleason
14 th	Janie Gleason Lois Ubersox
15 th	McKenzie Reuter
19 th	Virginia Douglas
28 th	Nikki Martin



JANUARY LITURGISTS

2 nd	Dave Sutherland
9 th	Marjean Sutherland
16 th	Scott Glendenning
23 rd	Dante Glendenning
30 th	Judy Huntington– Annual Meeting



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES	
7 th	Phil & Tana Risseuw



Deadline for the
February newsletter
articles is
January 24, 2022.