

CONNECT, GROW AND HAVE FUN

Sunday School Classes for All Ages at 9:45am: No Classes Today Nov 30

- Preschool & Kindergarten - Room 3
- 1st through 5th grade – Room 6
- 6th through 12th grade - Youth Room
- **Adult Class – Faithful: Christmas Through the Eyes of Joseph.** Meets in Witherspoon Hall Rooms 12/13

Youth Group on Sunday Nights - From 5:00 – 7:00pm for dinner, games and bible fellowship for youth ages 6-12th grade.

- November 30: No Youth Group December 07: Game Night!

Bible Studies:

- **Men’s Bible Study** on Mondays at 10:00am in Witherspoon Hall
- **Women’s Bible Study** on Wednesdays at 10:00am in Witherspoon Hall 12/13, (except for the Wednesday that Agape Circle meets)
- **Agape Women’s Circle** meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00am, held off campus. Next date is December 10. Contact Mary Kay at ausmbush3@gmail.com.
- **Lydia Women’s Circle** on the third Monday of each month at 6:30pm in Towner Hall, next date is December 15.

Fellowship Groups:

- **Desert Sages Games** on Tuesdays from 10:00am – 12:30pm. Come make new friends, play a variety of card and board games, eat popcorn and then top it off with dessert! Held in Witherspoon Hall.
- **Crafters Group** on Thursdays from 10:00am – 2:00pm. Want to unleash your inner artist? Express your creative talents? Join us - all skill levels and craft projects welcome. Witherspoon Hall 12/13.

Mission Outreach:

- **Casa Maria Sandwiches on Saturday, December 27 from 8:00 - 9:00am.** If you want to participate - each brown bag lunch should include two sandwiches (no mayo please); one fruit item, and two cookies. Donations of hygiene products and other non-perishable food items are welcome too! Drop off in Witherspoon parking lot.



ADVENT SEASON

Many years ago, the Worship Committee decided to decorate the sanctuary with the seasonal liturgical colors to enhance the visual appreciation of worship. Below is what you can anticipate as the colors change from the blue of Advent to the white of Christmas and Epiphany, and back to green.

- Blue is used for the decorations during the season of Advent (November 30 - December 24). Blue represents the royalty and hopefulness that is anticipated in the birth of Jesus.
- The outside of the church is decorated with burlap wreaths adorned with blue flowers and ribbons as a way of symbolizing the rustic nature of the stable where Jesus was born.
- The nativity figures located outside the church were donated by Norm and Laurie Snodgrass and the manger scene inside was given to the church by Phyllis Dean.
- The Christmas tree (in front of the Comfort Room window) is decorated with “Chrismons” which are special Christmas tree ornaments representing many of the symbols of Christianity including those of the Nativity.
- On December 25 the paraments (fabrics) on the Communion table and the pulpit will be changed to white (symbolizing joy, purity, and holiness) and will remain there until after January 6 which celebrates Epiphany or Three Kings Sunday.
- After January 6, the liturgical color will become the green of “ordinary time” (representing new life and growth).



Time to Order Your Sanctuary Flowers – Help us fill the sanctuary this season with beautiful flowers for our Christmas Eve Services. Each plant is \$20.00 and the *deadline to order is Sunday, December 16*. Plants can be dedicated to loved ones, and you can take them home after the 7:00pm service on December 24. Forms are on sanctuary entry table or see an usher.

“The Will to Dream” Advent Devotionals – We have printed devotionals for you to take home on the sanctuary entry table. These devotionals are from Illustrated Ministry and explore what many of us are carrying – quiet questions and deep weariness. We long for healing, hope and understanding. This ache isn’t a weakness; it’s a holy longing. A sacred desire for a world made whole.



Discovering and displaying Christ in here and out there



Welcome to Immanuel
November 30, 2025 • 11:00am
First Sunday of Advent

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE

*Please stand as you are comfortable when noted by an asterisk.

Prelude	<i>O Come, O Come Emmanuel</i> with " <i>Moonlight Sonata</i> " Arr. Tom Fettke
Welcome	Rev. Bart Smith
Hymn (GTG 85)	<i>Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah</i>
Lighting of the Advent Candle	Maddie Owens and Sarah Moritz
Opening Prayer	
*Call to Worship	
*Hymn (GTG 96)	<i>On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry</i>
Call to Confession	
Prayer of Confession	
Kyrie eleison	<i>Advent Kyrie, VENI EMMANUEL</i>
Assurance of Forgiveness	
*Passing the Peace	
*Hymn (GTG 92)	<i>While We Are Waiting, Come</i>
Children’s Message	Kris Goorsky
Prayer for Illumination	Joy Hager
First Reading	Isaiah 2: 1-5 (CEB)
Second Reading	Mark 13: 24-27 (CEB)
Sermon	<i>Vigilant Hope</i>
*Hymn (GTG 357)	<i>The Days are Surely Coming</i>
The Sacrament of Baptism	Sarah Moritz
Offertory	<i>May You Find a Light</i> , Josh Garrels
*Doxology	<i>Doxology for Advent, VENI EMMANUEL</i>

Prayer of Dedication

Announcements

*Hymn (GTG 103) Come, Now, O Prince of Peace

*Charge and Blessing

*Postlude Melody of Thanks, arr. Keith Christopher

WELCOME TO IMMANUEL

First time at Immanuel? We are so glad you chose to worship with us today! We would like to give you a welcome gift bag – it’s full of goodies and helpful information about our church. Please see an usher to receive yours. Giving envelopes, hymnals, Bibles, printed music and other materials are located on the worship cart inside the sanctuary on the left side by comfort room window.

Please take a moment to fill out the **Connection Card** and let us know that you are here and also if there are any changes to your contact information or a prayer request. All services are live-streamed on our website or YouTube – all past services are available to view as well.

The Nursery is Open for children ages infant to 3yrs. Our Comfort Room is available in the Sanctuary for parents of young children who need comfort and care. We also have children’s activity bags, and the playground is open.

Time Together for Children ages 3 - 5, from after the Children's Message in worship until the worship service ends. Please pick up your children in Towner Hall Room 3.

Join us for Fellowship after the services today. We meet in Witherspoon Hall for coffee and refreshments. It’s a great way to catch up with friends and make new ones!

Participants: Rev. Bart Smith, Interim Pastor; Kris Goorsky, Minister of Christian Formation; Clay Whittington, Director of Music Ministries; Ed Vander Woude, Audio/Video

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Office Hours: Open Monday - Thursday from 9:00am – 4:00pm; closed Fridays. Contact Kate Kelly at kate@immanuelpc.org or call (520) 296-2253. Pastor Bart Smith’s email is bart@immanuelpc.org.



Online Giving – If you would like to make an offering online, please use this QR code. Giving envelopes are located on the worship materials cart.

WEEKLY MESSAGE

Tolkien, “O Come, O Come Emmanuel,” and the Echoes that Formed Middle-earth

The beloved Advent hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel is far older than its familiar nineteenth-century English form. Its origins lie in the medieval “O Antiphons,” the sequence of chants sung in the final seven days of Advent beginning at least as early as the eighth century. These ancient antiphons, such as O Sapientia, O Adonai, and O Radix Jesse, invoke Christ through vivid titles drawn from Scripture. In The Carols of Christmas, Andrew Gant notes that the hymn’s plainchant roots carried a sense of mystery, antiquity, and linguistic richness that captivated generations of writers, including one who would later reshape the landscape of modern fantasy: J. R. R. Tolkien.

Tolkien, a philologist before he was a novelist, was deeply shaped by medieval languages, liturgy, and poetry. Among the texts that gripped his imagination was the Old English poem Crist, attributed to Cynewulf, which paraphrases and expands the imagery of the “O Antiphons.” In this poem appears the striking figure Éarendel, described as a “brightest of angels” or a radiant morning star. Tolkien first encountered the word as a young man and later wrote that it “pierced my heart,” launching decades of myth making. Gant points out that the linguistic and theological world surrounding the antiphons, including their Latin poetry, English paraphrases, and chant melodies, formed part of the imaginative soil from which Tolkien’s legendarium grew.

The resonance does not stop with Éarendel. Tolkien’s term Middle earth also reflects the cosmological language of early English Christian poetry. The Old English word middangeard, used in biblical translations and devotional verse, refers to the human world situated between heaven above and the underworld below. This worldview saturates the same medieval literary culture that preserved the “O Antiphons” and eventually produced the chant that became O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. Gant shows how such linguistic echoes, rooted in Scripture, chant, and liturgical imagination, helped Tolkien construct a mythic world that feels at once ancient and spiritually resonant.

The hymn’s plea, “O come, O Dayspring,” corresponds to the antiphon O Oriens, which proclaims Christ as the rising light shining on those in darkness. This imagery, so central to Advent, also parallels Tolkien’s lifelong fascination with light as a theological and symbolic force: the light of the Two Trees, the Silmarils, the star of Eärendil. While Tolkien did not simply borrow from the hymn, the shared wellspring of biblical prophecy, medieval poetry, and chant tradition gave him a vocabulary of light, longing, and hope. These traits shape both The Silmarillion and The Lord of the Rings.

Ultimately, as Gant suggests, the connection between Tolkien and O Come, O Come, Emmanuel is not one of direct adaptation but of shared inheritance. Both arise from a long Christian tradition that treasured language, prophecy, and the expectation of redemption. The same medieval world that sang the “O Antiphons” also gave young Tolkien the words that stirred his imagination and

through him it gave us Middle earth itself. During Advent, when we sing this ancient hymn, we join a chorus whose imagery has inspired faithful hearts for centuries, weaving together Scripture, song, and story in a way that continues to illuminate our lives today.

Clay Whittington, M.M.
Director of Music Ministries

UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS

Pastoral Nominating Committee Update: We are pleased to announce we have completed four steps of “The Immanuel Trail: Calling a Pastor.” The MDP (Ministry Discernment Profile) was approved by both the Immanuel Session and Presbytery de Cristo which allows us to have reached Step 11. The MDP is posted on the Church Leadership Connection website, and our pastoral position is now available for candidates to view and submit applications.

Posters of “The Immanuel Trail: Calling a Pastor” can be found in both the sanctuary and Witherspoon Hall. Remember to contact us with questions and thoughts on the PNC Committee email, ImmanuelPNC@gmail.com. We are grateful for God’s grace as he walks with us into Immanuel’s next season of church life. PNC Members: Cheralynn Baylor, Laurie Emery, Laura Fennema, Jonathan Friedmeyer, Debby Johnson, Joey Samoy, and Sean Shifflette

Thanksgiving Church Potluck is TODAY at 4:00pm. Come celebrate with your church family and bring a dish to share. We could also use volunteers to help set up and clean up. Held in Witherspoon Hall.

Wednesday Night Meals on December 3 at 5:30pm. We will have turkey pot pies, Waldorf salad and rolls. Meals are \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids 12 and under. Sign up in the sanctuary or email annemfujii@yahoo.com. Meets in Witherspoon Hall. Next date will be January 7.

A Christmas Experience Under the Stars Saturday, December 6 from 5:00 – 7:00pm. Come join us for a magical night under the stars! We will have a light dinner followed by a children’s play, carols with Clay, cookie decorating and hot cocoa. We will play reindeer games and finish the night off with an epic SNOWBALL FIGHT!

Breakfast with Santa! Saturday, December 13 from 9:00 -11:00am. We will have donuts and a hot cocoa bar, and create Christmas crafts together - plus you can take your picture with Santa himself! Meets in Witherspoon Hall.