



Esprit

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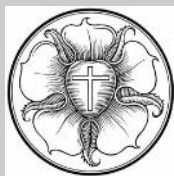
O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Expectation and Savior of the nations! Come and save us, O Lord our God!

MAGNIFICAT ANTIPHON FOR DECEMBER 23



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Hidden from View:

The Cloud of Witnesses, The Heavenly Mediator by Pastor Sutton

THE inspired author of Hebrews tells Christians that they are involved in a great mystery whenever they are gathered here around Christ. There is an unseen, hidden reality behind what is happening in the Divine Service:

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel (Hebrews 12.22-24).

In the last two articles, we have covered the first four hidden realities: you are in Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, with the angels as your assisting liturgists and choir, with the great congregation of all believers in Christ of all places, and with the unseen Judge of all who speaks words of grace and good tidings for the sake of His Son.

The **fifth** hidden, unseen part of the description of Divine Service in Hebrews 12 is that **around you are all Christians who have left this life and are now with their Lord.** "You have come... to the spirits of the righteous made perfect."

In October, we hosted over 150 runners for our second Brat Trot 5k races. I really like how we come together to put on a nice event for our community. Many members of the community have said to me what good things they are hearing about our race. I also like that the final leg of the race is to circle once more around our church, finishing in the alley. I've been sure to turn on the sanctuary lights for the early morning race to light up our stained glass windows from inside.


Any race reminds us of how the Bible describes our Christian life as a race. As a matter of fact, just before the passage we are considering, Hebrews has this memorable encouragement:


Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, look-


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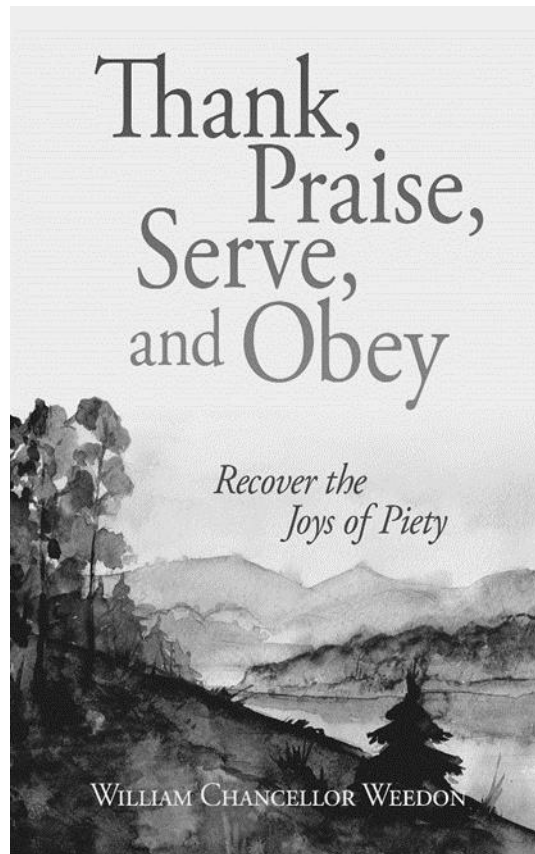
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Esprit is the informational and educational newsletter of Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Esprit de corps indicates a sense of union and of common interests and responsibilities, as developed among a group. Our community of Immanuel is centered in the Lord Jesus Christ as He comes to us in the Holy Scriptures and the Sacraments.

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church is an historic and centrally located parish—called, gathered, and strengthened by Christ's Word and Sacraments—confessional in doctrine, evangelical in orientation, orthodox in liturgy, cosmopolitan in membership; serving the Terre Haute community and the students of Indiana State University and Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and reaching out to the nations since 1858 as a parish of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Tuesday Evening Class: Eight Habits of A Highly Successful Christian



EXERCISE has been proven to increase strength, stamina, and our overall well-being. Just as with physical exercise, so too we must exercise ourselves spiritually. Do you want to be more at peace amidst an ever-changing and chaotic world? Are you anxious about the future? Do you just wish things in your life were a little more consistent? Whether we admit it or not, everyone desires these things.

Our Tuesday evening class continues this month. Join us at 6:30pm and form the "Eight Habits of a Highly Successful Christian" – our class on Christian piety using Rev. William Weedon's book, "Thank, Praise, Serve, and Obey." ✕

December 4 – **The Sixth Godly Habit: Confessing Christ**

The one who has tasted the joys of trusting in the Lord and experienced for himself how good it is simply cannot refrain from urging others to enjoy tasting this goodness too: the goodness of trusting in the Lord.

December 11 – **The Seventh Godly Habit: The Good Works God Has Prepared for Us to Do**

Good works are gracious opportunities to live the resurrection life in Christ. God's love for us in Christ stirs us to love and care for one another. His love helps us perceive the opportunity to serve and do good for the neighbor, reflecting and spreading God's love.

December 18 – **The Eighth Godly Habit: Remembering Death and the Day of Judgment**

Christians should think of death daily, remembering above all that they have in Christ victory over death, who defeated death for our sake. Thus they know in Christ how to die a blessed death, and so are set free to live a blessed and joyful life here in time, and there in eternity. ✕

Continued from page 1 **ing to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12.1-2).**

We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses: Christians who have run the good race, fought the good fight. They have taken up their cross and followed Jesus, through death, into life.

They have passed on the baton to you, and now sit in the "stadium" and urge you on as you run your lap in the race. When you attend Divine Service, they surround you like a "cloud" - they support you invisibly, praying for you in heaven, counting on you to be faithful in worshipping the Triune God, and in handing on that "baton," the saving Word of God you have received, to those who come after you.

So, knowing this promise of God, might we conclude that the best way to remember your relatives and friends who have finished the race of this life is here at the Lord's Table, rather than at the cemetery?

The **sixth** hidden, unseen reality of the Divine Service is that **standing beside you is the risen Lord Jesus, who is our mediator.** "You have come... to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant."

The approaching Advent and Christmas seasons remind us once more that our worship centers on the incarnate, crucified, and risen Lord Jesus Christ. The same Jesus who was born "infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall" is also the "Savior, who is Christ, the Lord." Jesus was born in Bethlehem to die and rise in Jerusalem and so bring about the new covenant in His blood, the forgiveness of sins on His account.

Jesus is now the key to our involvement in the heavenly assembly. He has bridged the gap between heaven and earth for us by His incarnation, death, and resurrection. He is ascended back to heaven, where even now He is our great high priest, our mediator in the heavenly sanctuary. Through Him and with Him, we come to our Father in heaven with our prayers, praises, and thanksgivings. Through Jesus, we receive from the Father everything: the Good News of our forgiveness and salvation, His own Body and Blood which forgives and sustains us, uniting us to Him and to our fellow Christians in this place, on earth.

Jesus comes to us in the Divine Service, the same Jesus who nursed in His mother's arms, and was laid to sleep in heavenly peace in the lowly Bethlehem manger. As He did in His mother's womb, and in His holy birth at Bethlehem, still today He brings heaven down to earth for us. At His Word, one day He will take us up alive with Him into the heavenly sanctuary, even as He has already raised our humanity there.

*The very Son of God sublime
entered into earthly time
To lead us from this world of cares
to heaven's courts as blessed heirs. Alleluia!*



*In poverty He came to earth
showing mercy by His birth;
He makes us rich in heavenly ways
as we, like angels, sing His praise. Alleluia!*

Next month, we will finish this description from Hebrews 12 of the unseen things present at Divine Service: in you is the blood of Jesus that speaks a good word to you and for you. To learn even more in the meantime, join us in our ongoing study of the letter to the Hebrews at 9am every Sunday morning! ✨

Jesus as the Ark by Vicar Cornwell

RECENTLY, I have been working through the book of Genesis. Not too long ago, I came across Genesis 7.18:

“And the waters were superior and they multiplied greatly upon the earth, but the ark walked upon the face of the waters.”

Typically, the italicized word is translated “floated.” However, another way this word may be rendered is “walked.” Why, you might ask, does this matter?

Throughout the Old Testament, we see the Hebrew word for “ark” popping up all over the place. It is used to describe the “basket” in which Moses was placed as a child to be saved from the Egyptians. The Ark of the Covenant was located in the Holy of Holies, which was God’s presence with His people. Fast forward to the New Testament and we all remember the story of Jesus walking upon the face of the waters (see St. Matthew 14.22-33). The Church has often been described as an ark. This is why we use nautical terms to describe church buildings (like “Nave” and “Narthex”). Those in the Church are kept safe from the dangerous waters of Satan and His forces.

In the New Testament, Paul reminds us that the Church is Christ’s body (1 Corinthians 12.12-

31). Therefore, in Jesus walking upon the stormy waters, we see that it is in Him that we are kept safe. His body is the ark that defends and protects us from the tumultuous waters. Just as Noah and his sons were preserved in the ark.

All these examples in the Old Testament point us to Christ, who is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1.30). In fact, everything in the Scriptures is to direct us to Christ and His work on our behalf (St. Luke 24.44).



Not only does this example direct us to fix our gaze on Christ, in whom all of God’s promises find their “yes” (2 Corinthians 1.20), it also shows us that God always has and always will work in the same way. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Hebrews 13.8). You may hear in other Christian circles things like, “God is still speaking.” This is indeed true, but He is speaking through His Son (Hebrews 1.1-2) who is revealed in the Scriptures (St. John 5.39-40). God does not change His mind. As long as you are in Him, nothing can harm you. Not even the threatening waters of this sinful world.

What a comfort to know that even amidst the changes and sufferings of this life, we have a sure anchor of hope in our Lord, Jesus Christ! ✠

Good Shepherd Institute 2018

by Kantor Schultz

ON November 4-6, I attended the nineteenth-annual Good Shepherd Institute Conference at Concordia Theological Seminary—Fort Wayne. I always enjoy attending this conference, and have rarely missed one. The first conference was held when I was a freshman in college, and it played a major role in fostering my interest in the relationship between church music and pastoral care.

One of the highlights of this year's conference was a sectional presentation by Christina Roberts, kantor of Our Savior Church and School in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Her presentation "The Church at Prayer Includes Children" featured five boys from her middle-school choir. Having worked with them for years since very young children, she had the singers demonstrate various hymns, psalms, and portions of the liturgy they have learned for daily prayer and the Divine Service at Our Savior.

She emphasized that she and her students do not just prepare musical selections as something to be performed or as part of a repertoire or curriculum (though they certainly are), but that, more importantly, they are part of the church and school's on-going prayer life together. In addition to being fine singers, the boys demonstrated their catechesis in knowledge about the catechism, the church year, the liturgy, and the Scriptures. It was an inspirational presentation. At Monday

Vespers, additional singers from her choirs at Our Savior joined to sing the antiphons for the Psalm and Magnificat, and a hymn.

I also attended sectionals by Jonathan Busarow, director of the Fort Wayne Children's Choir, about choral rehearsals; and by Robert Rothemeyer, director of the Seminary Library, displaying some of the hymnals in the seminary's rare book collection.



The Sunday Vespers included the Seminary Schola Cantorum singing "He, Watching over Israel" from Psalms 121 and 138 by Felix Mendelssohn; "I Am the Resurrection" by Heinrich

Schütz; and the Magnificat by Charles Stanford. Technology today allows everyone easy access to hear these fine selections on YouTube, and I would especially encourage you to look up Cantata 106 by J.S. Bach "Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit" ("God's Time is the Very Best Time"), also sung by the choir. It is a marvelous musical and theological exposition by Bach about the Christian view of mortality and the hope of eternal life.

The musical events also included a recital by violinist Bethany Stoeber of Bach Partita 2 in D Minor, and a hymn festival on Monday evening with organ, choral, and instrumental music by seminary Kantors Kevin Hildebrand and Matthew Machemer and the Seminary Kantorei. ✱

Lectures in Church Music 2018

by Kantor Schultz

I attended the Lectures in Church Music annual conference on October 21-23 at Concordia University Chicago. It was a good time to visit with friends and colleagues and to meet other musicians who serve Lutheran parishes.

The keynote speaker, Samuel Eather-ton, presented on "Church Music for Children: Spiritual Formation through Singing." His presentation had a number of quotations from young adults in his parish reflecting back on their experiences with liturgy and hymnody as children, and the importance that hymns and liturgy play in strengthening faith. It is essential for parents to teach their children to sing the hymns and liturgy, to pray together in the home, and to encourage their regular participation in the Divine Service. This is an important message to continually reinforce.



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CHICAGO

There was a hymn festival with the university choir and instruments on Sunday evening, and an organ recital by Tom Mueller of Concordia University—Irvine, CA on Monday evening. Both were uplifting experiences, and opportunities to hear music both familiar and new.

Many choices were available to attend for workshop sessions, a fine blend of both scholarly and practical topics. I attended two by Zebulon Highben, one on choir rehearsal planning and one on Renaissance Music for the church choir. I also attended one by Lawrence Rast on Joseph Seiss, a nineteenth-century pastor with contributions to Lutheran liturgy and hymnody in America; and a workshop on interpreting hymns for leading congregational hymnody.

It was beneficial to attend, and I look forward to next year's conference. ✘

Weihnachtsgottesdienst

IT'S time for our annual Weihnachtsgottesdienst, that is, German Christmas Service, on Sunday, December 16, at 4pm. It has become such an annual event that many people from some distance look forward to this special service conducted in German, the language of our parish's founders. It is a day when we invite the community to join us in a service unique to Terre Haute. We need our members to be hosts and participants. We need donations of desserts for the fellowship time after the service. Of course, if you can make German pastries or cookies, that is better, but we will gladly accept other donations of sweets. Please find ways of helping by hosting, singing in the choir, or simply by attending. As always, we provide an English translation of the service. It is an opportunity to make Immanuel known to those who might not otherwise set foot inside our doors. ✘



Children's Christmas Service

THE Children's Christmas Service is Wednesday, December 19. The practice schedule continues as follows:

Sundays, December 2 and 9; 9-9:15am and 10-10:15am.

Wednesdays, December 5 and 12; 6:15-6:45pm, following the midweek dinner.

Sundays, December 9 and 16; Noon-2pm, with lunch served.

Our volunteer leader is Karie Sutton. She will need volunteers to help. If you are willing, please let her know. If you have any questions, please contact Karie_Sutton@yahoo.com or 972-922-7276 (cell). ✘

Council of Deacons Report

by Richard Monday

THE November 3 meeting opened with meditation on the Word of God, in which Pastor led a prayer for the parish, followed by the study of the Lutheran Confessions. We are studying the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article VII on the Lord's Supper, and the "Crypto-Calvinist" controversy that brought that article about.

Pastor Sutton reported on membership changes in October, including two funerals conducted. Pastor and Vicar are teaching a Tuesday night class on Christian piety. Former member T.J. Mattick is now an Indiana District Vice-President for the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, and will be invited to present on his work to our adult Bible class in the future. T.J. also supplied a contact to check into restoring the bowl of the baptismal font, which has oxidized and developed an unsightly ring. Pastor put forward the names of President Matthew Harrison and Dr. Lawrence Rast for nomination as Synodical President for the 2019 Synod election. The council gave their approval. Finally, the appraisal for the altar painting required by our insurance company has been

arranged, and the council directed the expense for the appraisal to come from the Heritage Fund.

Board Reports:

Finance: Budget for 2019, including salaries, Heritage Fund, and District/Synod mission giving was discussed. Council approved recommending District/Synod at \$2000, Higher Things, Lutheran Heritage Foundation and Issues, Etc. all at \$400 for 2019.

Outreach: Brat Trot was a success, and will be held at a similar time next year.

Property and Grounds: Building usage was discussed. Discussed installation of security cameras. Mentioned that we are shooting for the completion of the new library room for January.

Education: There will be a meeting soon, and will work on the 2019 budget.

Annual Congregational Meeting: Sunday, December 2nd, following Divine Service.

The next regular meeting of the Council of Deacons is Saturday, December 1 at 7am in the Parish Center. Other communicant members who wish to meet with the Council of Deacons to discuss special concerns, needs, or requests should make arrangements with the Chairman of the Council of Deacons prior to a scheduled meeting. ✂

Immanuel Parish Membership

Christian Burial:

Tamara Burns – died October 22

Adult Bible Class in December

Service with a Clean Conscience—Hebrews 9.1-14

The imperfect service in the earthly sanctuary of the old covenant. The Hebrews author appeals to our imagination to show that our present involvement in the Divine Service resembles and yet surpasses all that.

Advent Midweek Dinners

JOIN us for midweek dinner before Advent Vespers on Wednesdays. RSVP on the inserts in the Sunday Parish News. Wednesday, December 5 will be Mexican-themed and Wednesday, December 12 will be Soup, Salad, and Sandwich. Please also bring non-perishable food donations for our local food pantries. ✂

DIVINE SERVICE is celebrated every Sunday at 10:30am and on Feast Days as announced.

DIVINE OFFICE: LAUDS (MORNING PRAYER) is prayed at 9:30am Tuesday – Thursday, and Feast Days as announced; **VESPERS** (EVENING PRAYER) is prayed at 4:30pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and at 6:30pm on Wednesdays.

PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION is offered the third Thursday of the month (*December 20*) from 5-6pm, or anytime by appointment. Vespers is prayed at 4:30pm prior to Confession.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY are at 9am.

ADULT CHOIR rehearses on Wednesdays from 7-8:30pm, and on Sundays from 9:45-10:20am.

“WORSHIP ANEW,” produced by Lutheran Media Ministries of Fort Wayne and supported by Immanuel’s special gift collection, airs every Sunday morning on WTWO at 8am.

WESTMINSTER BIBLE STUDY meets on the last Friday of the month at 1:30pm except when there is a holiday at the end of the month. All members are invited to attend. The next meeting will be December 28.

ESPRIT DEADLINE for January is Saturday, December 15. Volunteers are needed to help with the mailing on Friday, December 21.

Serving in December at Divine Service

Altar Guild – Faith Fenner; Janet Crucitti

Ushers – Volunteers Needed

Tellers – Kathy Taylor; Jamie Thomas; Barb Seliger

Acolytes – December 2: Ian Crucitti; Levi Altvater | December 5: Adam Sutton
 December 9: Austin Fitzgerald; Levi Altvater | December 12: Noah Schulz
 December 16: Eli Gibbens; Adam Sutton | December 23: Evan Pound; Pearson Tate
 December 24: (7pm) Kole Mullins; Levi Altvater; Tony Altvater; Austin Fitzgerald
 (11pm) Connor Howard; Adam Sutton; Pearson Tate; Eli Gibbens; Noah Sutton
 December 25: Noah Sutton; Evan Pound; Noah Schulz; Adam Sutton; Ian Crucitti
 December 30: Pearson Tate; Eli Gibbens

Schedule of Divine Liturgies for December

December 2	Ad Te Levavi – First Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 5	Wednesday of Advent I, 7pm	Vespers
December 9	Populus Zion – Second Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 12	Wednesday of Advent II, 7pm	Vespers
December 16	Gaudete – Third Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
	German Service, 4pm	Weihnachtsgottesdienst
December 19	Wednesday of Advent III, 7pm	Children’s Service
December 23	Rorate Coeli – Fourth Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 24	Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Eve, 7pm	Divine Service
	Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Midnight, 11pm	Divine Service
December 25	Nativity of Our Lord – Christmas Day, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 30	First Sunday after Christmas, 10:30am	Divine Service