



But at midnight there  
was a cry,  
“Here is the  
bridegroom! Come  
out to meet him.”

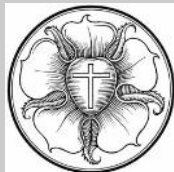
ST. MATTHEW 25 : 6

FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL  
FOR THE LAST SUNDAY IN  
THE CHURCH YEAR



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# Esprit

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November/December 2020

## Additional Divine Service

DEAR brothers and sisters in Christ,

In consultation with and in concurrence with the Council of Deacons, Immanuel will be adding a Tuesday evening Divine Service, **beginning Tuesday, November 3 at 6pm.** With this service being added, **live streaming of Sunday’s Divine Service will no longer be offered.**

We are offering this service to provide a higher level of distancing for those who would be more comfortable attending in such a setting. It is also encouraged and expected that attendees wear masks, especially upon entering and exiting the building and the sanctuary, for the comfort of fellow parishioners.

The Divine Service on Tuesday evening will be the same lectionary readings and sermon as the previous Sunday.

**The Divine Service will be Tuesday evenings at 6pm.** To minimize volunteer needs, we will only open the Swan Street rear door. It is desired that everyone enter and exit the Church through the back hallway and the entrance door by the church library, maintaining proper distancing.

Please email or call if there are any questions.

In Christ’s service,  
Pastor Sutton

## Incense and the Prayers of the Saints by Pastor Sutton

AS the Festival of All Saints occurs on Sunday, November 1, I would like to reflect on another aspect of the Church where heaven and earth are joined together in worship of the Lamb on His throne. Before His throne rise the prayers of the saints in heaven and on earth. To visualize these prayers ascending, God in His Word associates the rising smoke of burned incense with the prayers of God’s saints of all times and places:

Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice! (Psalm 141.2)


And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. (Revelation 5.8)


Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel. (Revelation 8.2-4)


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## Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

IELCTH.org

 ielcth

 @ielcth

 @ielc\_th

645 Poplar Street  
Terre Haute, IN 47807-4203

Phone: 812.232.4972

Fax: 812.234.3935

**Rev. Jacob R. Sutton**, *Pastor*  
pastor@ielcth.org

**Rev. Gary W. Schultz**, *Kantor*  
kantor@ielcth.org

**Rev. Philip G. Meyer**,  
*Pastor Emeritus*

**Sem. Brendan G. Harris**, *Vicar*  
vicar@ielcth.org

**Stacy Gibbens**,  
*Administrative Assistant*  
stacy.gibbens@ielcth.org

*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.

*Continued from page 1*

Recently, according to an article published on the Roman Catholic news website Aleteia, studies were conducted on the use of frankincense to purify “microbially contaminated air” within a seventeenth-century sanctuary. The study found that there are “antimicrobial properties of essential oil derived from frankincense and recommended its use as an “occasional air purifier” even apart from church rituals. Some of you reading this may have your antennae up as “essential oils” have become a trending home health product many are purchasing.

At the famous church of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, for centuries pilgrims have crowded into the Nave where a giant incense burner called the “Botafumeiro” swings from one side of the giant space to the other. (Look it up on Google/YouTube, it’s quite a show...) Early pilgrims to that ceremony believed the incense would have preventative effects against the plague, in addition to the spiritual reasons for its use. Other studies cited in the Aleteia article have investigated anti-inflammation and anti-cancer effects of the frankincense essential oil; other studies show that burning and smelling frankincense may decrease anxiety or depression in people. Pure frankincense (unadulterated by other materials) may well be good for us to smell! Incense is sold now as “hypoallergenic” – which is just ultra-pure frankincense.

We do not use incense in the Divine Service because of studies and science, however, even if the effects may be favorable to health and well-being. The reason to use incense in the Divine Service is that we hear from God’s Word that incense has been associated with God’s presence in his gifts of grace for His people. Incense visually and aromatically confesses God’s gracious presence, holiness, and purity, all of which God gives to us by grace in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

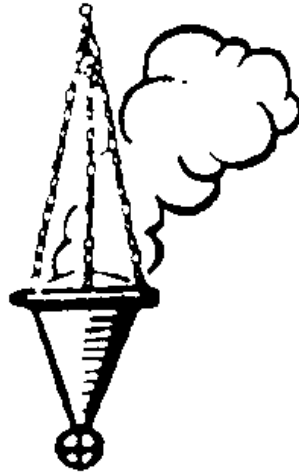
In the Epiphany story of the visit of the magi from the east, we are told of their gift to our Lord of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Frankincense was one of the consecrated incenses described in the Old Testament ceremonies. It was offered on a specialized incense altar in the Tabernacle and later in the Jerusalem Temples. Frankincense is a tree resin that is collected and crystallized, and when burned gives off a sweet smell and copious visible smoke. The Old Testament ceremony of offering incense indicated the ritual purity of the sacrifices offered to God on the altar. For Christians, these always point us forward to the one, complete, and truly pure atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ Himself on Calvary.

*Continued on page 3*

Continued from page 2 St. Paul writes that our Lord offered Himself as a “fragrant offering” (Ephesians 5.2) and in Christ, the faithful are

“...led in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life” (2 Corinthians 2.14-16).

Does St. Paul have in mind an early use of incense and processions in early Divine Services? He certainly looks back to the Temple liturgies fulfilled by Christ. In the least, Paul is discussing the Preaching of Law and Gospel, “the knowledge of Him everywhere” in the absolution of sins proclaimed in the Word of Christ. Paul freely associates Christ, His Word proclaimed, and His Body the Church, with incense. This stands with Psalm 141, our prayers rising as incense to be



heard by the Father, precisely because we pray what our Lord has taught us in His Word to pray for, for forgiveness and deliverance from evil and His Kingdom, and because we pray in the Name of and through the Lord Jesus, the object of our faith.

Use of incense in the New Testament Divine Service is a confession not necessarily made with words, but with our ritual actions. Burning incense and censuring the holy things of God set apart for holy use in the Divine Service – from the altar itself, to communion elements, to the servers, to the congregation itself – teaches and confesses in both sight and smell that we believe that the holy Son of God, Jesus Christ, is present and acting in the Divine Service to hear and answer the prayers of the saints both here on earth and in heaven, and is present to make His people holy, pure, and reconciled before His Father on account of His atoning sacrifice, through the means of the Word proclaimed and the Sacrament delivered. ✠

## Children’s Christmas Service

The Children’s Christmas Service is Wednesday, December 16 at 7pm. Save the date and time now. It will be here before you know it. Our volunteer leader is Karie Sutton. She can use volunteers to help. Please let her know of your willingness to help, and sign up on the sheet outside the Parish Office.



The rehearsals will be Sundays in November during Sunday School, and Sundays, December 6 and 13 from noon-2pm, with lunch served. ✠

## Chili Cook-Off and Euchre Tournament

Saturday, November 7 – 6-9pm

Sign up on the insert in Sunday’s bulletin or on the sheet outside the Parish Office.



## Do Not Be Afraid by Vicar Harris

THERE is nothing new about disease. Ever since Adam's fall into sin, its disease has inflicted all of mankind through our fathers, and we have known no peace in our flesh. With sin, we have lost eternal life, we have been barred from the Garden, and have been sent out into the wilderness where all manner of rats and bugs carry pathogens from one sinner to another.

The course of history has been dramatically altered not only by Adam's sin, but by the plagues which have followed. For example, in the days of the blessed Emperor Justinian, a great plague swept the Roman Empire and nearly claimed the emperor's life. Many kings have had their designs frustrated by a ravaging plague; many empires have risen and fallen during times of pestilence.

But we know there is one king whose reign has never faltered in the face of neither sin nor disease. Jesus became flesh and walked among sinners, among plague victims and lepers, and laid His hands on them and healed them with His Word. Despite being the Almighty God of heaven, with no need whatsoever to set foot on earth, He nevertheless comes down to us in love and brings absolute healing, granting His beloved children the strength through His death and resurrection to endure all manner of hardships and all plagues which sin has unleashed upon us.

Our Lutheran forefathers knew this perhaps better than anyone else. Martin Luther himself was in Wittenberg when a plague came through town. He opened his home, the famous Black Cloister, which was once his monastic house when he was a friar, and he and his wife Katharina housed and ministered to the plague

victims in town. Luther's own daughter, Magdalena, was taken by the sickness at the age of only thirteen. Over the next century, plagues swept Germany.

There was also war to contend with. In 1618, the Thirty Years' War began. Many Lutheran pastors ministered to their flocks and saw their people decimated by plague and battles, with entire cities being razed to the ground by roaming armies, by their plundering, raping, and by the diseases they brought along.

For example, the pastor and hymnist Johann Heermann, known for his hymns such as O Dearest Jesus (439) and O God, My Faithful God (696), was a pastor in Köben (a town in Silesia, which is now in modern Poland). He ministered to his flock throughout the plagues despite his sickly condition from birth and despite the death of his first wife. Starting in 1632, Roman Catholic soldiers marched through his town and plundered it on at least four separate occasions, and Heermann and his people lost all of their worldly possessions and many of their loved ones several times over just a few years. In 1634, he became too ill to preach, and he remained sickly until his death in 1647, a year before the end of the war with the Treaty of Westphalia.

Another very stunning example of bravery in the face of disease comes from the beloved St. Francis of Assisi, who operated as a friar in the thirteenth century. Francis deliberately went and lived among the lepers in Italy in their leper colonies in order to serve them. "He washed their feet, bound up their wounds, pressing out the corrupt matter, and then washing and cleansing them." But Francis did not limit himself to the work of a mere physician, but "having done this he kissed their wounds with great and marvelous devotion, as one who in brief space was to become an evangelical physician, and true healer of souls" (The Life of

St. Francis of Assisi by St. Bonaventure [Gastonia, NC: TAN Books, 2010], 11). After this, there is even a story where a man with a jaw deformity that ate away at his flesh came to Francis to kiss his feet. But Francis forbid it, and instead kissed the man on his deformed mouth, after which he was reportedly healed. Whatever one might believe about the miraculous nature of these events, Francis is operating in nothing other than the evangelical spirit which Christ Himself showed to lepers.

A more modern example comes from the Kingdom of Hawaii, before it was an American territory. On the island of Molokai, there was a leper colony, which was ostracized from the rest of Polynesian and Western society. And yet a priest named Father Damien de Veuster, originally from Belgium, went to them and ministered unto them, living with them as their pastor, and he tended to their leprosy. Eventually, Damien himself caught the disease and he too became a leper. Nevertheless, he continued his ministry. In 1889, after sixteen years on Molokai, the disease finally took him, and he has since been fittingly known as St. Damien of Molokai, for he truly followed the example of the Lord unto death.

What we have before us today is no different than the many diseases which have come and gone over the face of the earth; no different from the challenges which has faced our fathers before us. Disease will come and wreak havoc, and then it will go as if it were never here.

But the Kingdom of God will always stand and shall always reign no matter how hard the adversary may rail against it. The Lord grants health and healing, and even when His servants must die, yet they shall live (see St. John 11.25). He grants Himself, He who is Life, in the cup of His Blood, in which there can be no poison nor disease.

Yes, our times are wicked with sin, with plague and paranoia, but do not be scared away from receiving the true healing of body and soul which comes from God through Christ alone. Come, dear people, to where He is found, at the feast of the King in His Church; do not be afraid, and let us confess with Johann Heermann:

O God, my faithful God,  
true fountain ever flowing.  
Without whom nothing is,  
all perfect gifts bestowing:  
Give me a healthy frame,  
and may I have within  
A conscience free from blame,  
a soul unstained by sin.

And on that final day,  
when all the dead are waking,  
Stretch out Your mighty hand,  
my deathly slumber breaking.  
Then let me hear Your voice,  
redeem this earthly frame,  
And bid me to rejoice,  
with those who love Your name.

*(Lutheran Service Book 696, stanzas 1 and 6) ✕*

### Serving in November and December at Divine Service

Altar Guild – November: Kelly Bays; Pam Anderson; Hannah Wineinger  
December: Faith Fenner; Janet Crucitti

Tellers – November: Rich & Deb Bucy; Jack & Pat Casassa  
December: Kathy Taylor; Jamie Thomas; Barb Seliger

Ushers – November: Darryl Harris; Jared Gibbens; Justen Gibbens  
December: Marvin Gradert; Scot Mullins; Terry Cummings

## Weihnachtsgottesdienst

IT'S time for our annual Weihnachtsgottesdienst, that is, German Christmas Service, on Sunday, December 13, 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. ✂



## Brat Trot 2020

Our fourth annual Brat Trot 5K race was Saturday, October 17. We had 92 participants in the races this year. Thanks to Brad and Kari Cress for heading up this unique event for our church and community. Thanks to the many volunteers who helped make the day possible and to be enjoyed by all.



## Council of Deacons Report by Richard Monday

THE October 3rd meeting opened with prayer led by Pastor Sutton. All deacons, congregational assembly president Kris Bilyeu, Pastor, and Vicar Harris were all present by Zoom computer meeting.

Pastor Sutton reported on the Saturday children’s catechesis class, on incoming transfers of new families to the parish, and that two baptisms were conducted: Nyla Clay and William Branson III.

Pastor Sutton and the Deacons discussed the ongoing live streaming of the Divine Service. It was decided by consensus to institute a Tuesday Divine Service, beginning the Tuesday, November 3, at 6pm. Live streaming will then be discontinued. This Divine Service will give parishioners a more “distanced” and comfortable setting to return to the Divine Service and receive the Sacrament.

The Council proceeded to Board Reports:

- ✧ Education: YPI activities are being planned, including the youth serving

Apple Strudel on Sunday, October 25, and a Euchre night on November 7.

- ✧ Finance: John Schulz reported that Immanuel has a positive cash balance on hand due to the PPP loan proceeds.
- ✧ Property and Grounds: The roof cap and damaged slate on the back roof of the 1885 building were repaired for only \$800. Gutter drains have been repaired. A gate has been purchased to protect the air conditioner units next to the Church. We will be replacing burned out lights in the Nave soon.
- ✧ Outreach/Fellowship: A meeting will be held soon to discuss Advent and Christmas plans.
- ✧ Worship: Rick Todd will relate the service changes discussed at this meeting to the ushers.

The next regular meeting of the Council of Deacons is Saturday, November 7 at 7am. 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

<b>Baptism:</b>	September 13	Nyla Clay
	September 20	William Branson III
<b>Funeral:</b>	October 24	Thomas Allen Reck – died October 16

### Third Quarter 2020 Finance Report

Amount needed to meet quarterly operating budget:	\$69,719.76
Third quarter contributions made toward operating fund:	<u>\$65,285.78</u>
Difference:	\$ 4,432.98

Immanuel did receive a PPP Loan/Grant in the amount of \$31,000.00 which is not included above.

**DIVINE SERVICE** is celebrated every Sunday at 10:30am; every Tuesday at 6pm; and on Feast Days as announced.

**DIVINE OFFICE: LAUDS** (MORNING PRAYER) and **VESPERS** (EVENING PRAYER) are prayed as announced in the weekly *Parish News*.

**PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** is offered the fourth Thursday of the month from 5-6pm, or anytime by appointment. It will be *Tuesday*, November 24 (due to Thanksgiving) and Thursday, December 17 (*third* Thursday, due to Christmas Eve).

**SUNDAY SCHOOL AND ADULT BIBLE STUDY** are Sunday at 9am.

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT BIBLE STUDY** with dinner is Sunday at 5pm in the Parish Center.

**ADULT CHOIR** rehearsals are on Thursdays from 7-8:30pm, and Sundays from 9:45-10:20am in the east end of the Parish Center.

**"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.

**ESPRIT DEADLINE** for January/February is Tuesday, December 15. Volunteers are needed to help with the mailing. Watch the *Parish News* for the date.

### Schedule of Divine Liturgies for November and December

November 1	All Saints' Day, 10:30am	Divine Service
November 8	Third-Last Sunday in the Church Year, 10:30am	Divine Service
November 15	Second-Last Sunday in the Church Year, 10:30am	Divine Service
November 22	Last Sunday in the Church Year, 10:30am	Divine Service
November 29	Ad Te Levavi – First Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 2	Wednesday of Advent I, 7pm	Vespers
December 6	Populus Zion – Second Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 9	Wednesday of Advent II, 7pm	Vespers
December 13	Gaudete – Third Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
	German Vespers, 4pm	Weihnachtsgottesdienst
December 16	Wednesday of Advent III, 7pm	Children's Service
December 20	Rorate Coeli – Fourth Sunday in Advent, 10:30am	Divine Service
December 23	Wednesday of Advent IV, 7pm	Vespers
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 27	St. John, Apostle and Evangelist, 10:30am	Divine Service