

Worship Schedule

Sunday mornings ~ the heart of our life together

9:00 Sunday School

9:15 Nursery Care begins (infants ~ age 5)

9:15 Choir Practice in the Sanctuary

10:00 Worship for All Ages ~ Sanctuary

11:00 Refreshments and Fellowship Time ~ in the Narthex

From the Salvation Army

The local representatives of the Salvation Army have extended an invitation to churches and other groups in Cambridge to help with their Bell Ringing fund raising campaign. They tell us they have many locations within the 5 mid-shore counties. The three in Cambridge are: Walmart, Craig's, and Food Lion. Their goal is to have someone ringing at each location from 10am-8pm, Monday-Saturday. They have openings starting Monday Nov. 20 - Saturday Dec. 23.

If you would like to volunteer, please contact:

Melissa Porterfield

Volunteer Bell Coordinator

Cell: 443-477-1822

m.bellcoordinator@gmail.com

Salvation Army

200 Washington St. Cambridge, MD 21613

410-228-2442

Confirmation Class Invitation

In January we will begin a Confirmation for youth in the seventh grade or older. There will be a meeting for youth, parents, Council and Spiritual Council members, and anyone interested in the Confirmation process. We would like to meet after worship on Sunday, January 7 to discuss expectations, requirements, supervision, and schedules. Our goal is to offer an opportunity for our youth to grow in faith and commitment to God and the church. Please plan to join us on that Sunday as we begin our journey. Please see Pastor Dale if you have any questions or would like to participate.

Helping others through Amazon Christmas Shopping

It is good and pleasing to God to help others during this season. We have heard of a way to help others from Earl's Place, a ministry serving homeless men that grew out of the work of several of our Baltimore UCC churches. They have shared with us a way to help their work. They said here is an easy way to help a man experiencing

homelessness change his life. Shop for everyone on your gift list this holiday at smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1857927 and Amazon donates to United Ministries, Inc. Perhaps this resource is also offered for other charities as well.

Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 3: First Sunday of Advent

Scriptures: Isaiah 64:1-9, Psalm 80:1-7 and 17-19, I Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37

The season of Advent, the season in which we are called to prepare spiritually for Christmas, begins very late this year. So on the first Sunday in December we will observe the First Sunday of Advent. Themes of waiting, preparation and even repentance can be found in our scripture lessons in these weeks. Today, the prophet Isaiah begins with a petition to God to show his might, but turns into a confession of an impatient people. The psalmist offers a prayer for protection from enemies and Paul gives thanks for the people of the church in Corinth. As we begin a new year in the lectionary cycle (Year B) many of our gospel lessons will be from the gospel of Mark. That begins today as we read about the coming of the Son of Man described with apocalyptic imagery, a lesson about a fig tree, and an exhortation about the necessity for watchfulness.

We will celebrate the Lord's Supper on this first Sunday in December.

Sunday, December 10: Second Sunday of Advent

Scriptures: Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2 and 8-13, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

Unlike the gospels of Matthew and Luke, which begin with accounts of Jesus's birth, Mark does not include these stories in his gospel but begins with John the Baptist and his proclamation about the coming of the Messiah and the need to repent and prepare for the coming of the long awaited One. Isaiah, in our Old Testament lesson says, "Comfort, O comfort my people," as he speaks to the Hebrews in exile, and says, their time of punishment is over, and God is bringing them home. Peter, again emphasizing the themes of waiting and preparing, urges patience, and says God's promises are trustworthy and God's timing is not in accord with human expectations. The psalm is a prayer for restoration of God's favor

On this Sunday, the children of Sunday School will dress up in costume and present their Christmas story tableau.

Sunday, December 17: Third Sunday in Advent

Scriptures: Isaiah 61:1-4 and 8-11, Psalm 126, I Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8 and 19-28

The Third Sunday of Advent finds us reading the gospel of John's introduction and testimony of John the Baptist. In the days following the Hebrew's return from exile (really big Old Testament event), the prophet Isaiah brings words of deliverance and glorification of the people of Israel. The psalmist offers us a psalm praising God for the restoration of the community. Finally, in the closing words of the letter to the church in Thessalonica, Paul invites the church to rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances.

Sunday, December 24: Fourth Sunday in Advent

Scriptures: 2 Samuel 7:1-11 and 16, Luke 1:47-55, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

December 24 will be a busy day. In the morning we will worship and celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent and in the evening we will gather for our Christmas Eve worship. Again, even though we really don't have long to wait, in the morning, we continue the time of preparation and hear the stories of God's covenant with David in the Old Testament lesson. In Paul's letter to the Romans we read the final doxology of the letter which encompasses the history of salvation, major themes of the letter, and the missionary commission of the church that all nations might believe and obey the gospel. We are also invited to read two portions of the gospel of Luke. From chapter one we hear the story of how the birth of Jesus is foretold to Mary and in the second chapter we read, "The Magnificat," or Mary's song of praise which follows Jesus' birth.

Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
Our Christmas Eve worship will not be a surprise. As in past years there will be a reading of the Christmas scriptures, a simple story for the children, candles and lots of Christmas music.

Sunday December 31: First Sunday after Christmas

Scriptures: Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 148, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40
In the week following Christmas, the prophet Isaiah, using images of a well adorned bride and bridegroom and a well-cared for garden, rejoices for the salvation provided by God. The joyous praise continues in the psalm and as Simeon and Anna react as the infant Jesus is presented in the Temple. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul describes us as slaves and born under the law before Jesus came onto the world, and after as children, adopted by God.

Pastor's Message

I Believe

I don't like Christmas. Ask my family, I often do not enjoy Christmas. I do not like the giving of excessive gifts. Giving gifts of overwhelming numbers and cost, just for the sake of giving. I don't like the worship of materialism rampant in this season. I don't like expansion of the buying season to be offensive. I do not like the idolization of materialism. I am deeply troubled by the culture's celebration of the holiday. I believe our culture's appropriation of Christmas has obscured the meaning of the event.

What then is the true meaning of Christmas? There may be many ways to answer this question, but I will go back to my seminary days and an "Award winning" paper on Christology I wrote for graduation. When speaking in Christological terms, that is, when discussing or describing who and what Jesus is and does, one can look at several focal points of the gospels. One theologian, Gabriel Fackre, focused on the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. If I may, I would like to offer a brief description or summary.

When reviewing all that Jesus has done, one might begin with Jesus as Example and **Teacher**. Much of the gospels are filled with the parables, healings, and lessons Jesus offered to his disciples and all who would listen (and some who would not). Much of this took place in Galilee as he was addressing the ignorance (not knowing something) and apathy (not caring about something) about God and the practice of right living. In these actions Jesus was seeking to save us by illuminating and inspiring us.

As we think about Jesus and the things that he did, we must not forget the events of Good Friday. Despite its importance, Christ's death on Calvary, as we can see by the attendance on Good Friday worship services, is often the event we like to celebrate least. However, through his passion (suffering) and death, Jesus was addressing the broken relationship with God that we have caused by our sinful, divisive actions. However we understand it, in dying, Jesus, our **Savior**, turned judgement into mercy and reconciled a sinful humanity separated from God. Through Christ's death, people and God are united again.

And of course we cannot discuss the work of Christ without remembering the Easter event. In the resurrection Jesus defeated, as the Bible says, the power and principalities of this world. In simpler terms, Jesus, our **Lord**, with divine power, conquered evil and death. The statement made here is that God is all powerful and nothing on earth is more powerful than God.

Finally, we return to Christmas. In the Bethlehem event, God takes on human form in Jesus. On Christmas we celebrate the incarnation – we celebrate God as **Immanuel** (God with us). This was always the hardest part for me to explain, but I will try again. You have probably heard it said that for God, a day is like a thousand years to us. The point is that God's world is vastly different, even apart and separate from the world we know. Our world is finite, limited and confined. God's world is infinite and timeless. So, it has been suggested that in the Incarnation, the two worlds are brought together, and in Jesus' birth, the two worlds are connected and we can be saved in the fullest of ways – eternal life in God's presence is possible through the Incarnation we celebrate at Christmas.

I hope my very quick and simple explanation of the work of Christ was helpful. Obviously, one cannot pick just one of the models I described above. Jesus, without question to almost any believer, is all of the above. In my seminary paper, I suggested, if I remember correctly, that the Christmas event was the most important component of the work of Christ because it was the greatest indicator of God's intentions and because all of the other actions depended first on God becoming human. Right or wrong, I must have argued my position well, because I was awarded, along with another student, the \$100 Christology Award, announced at graduation.

Christmas for me is the highest of Christian holy days. It is Sacred. And I am disturbed by the way in which we, definitely in our society, and even in the church, diminish the holiness of this event. You can probably see why I struggle so much with Christmas celebrations.

Conclusion

But I also hope you can see how I like Christmas. I like the quiet time with my family. I like the exchange of a few carefully chosen gifts. I like it when the gifts given are opened with patience, and the giver is acknowledged and appreciated. I like music, classic or popular, that respects the story and meaning of the season. I like a focus on peace and caring for others (especially those in need). I like the sincere search for faith and love in this season. I like a truly spiritual service of worship on Christmas. I love what the incarnation of Christ says about God. I like the Christmas that has Christ in it. Merry Christmas!

MISSION BRUNCH

MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE A SPECIAL OFFERING AT THE NOVEMBER MISSIONS BRUNCH to support local benevolences. The cake & pie auction was a lot of fun and brought in \$500, and we were able to sell the left-over soups to get a little more. Preliminary numbers for the mission meal are \$9,683 gross, with possibility of other monies coming in, less expenses yet to be taken out. So, final figures are not yet available. Patrick Walker from Church World Services was very informative and did a wonderful job letting us know about the CROP Walks, put on through CWS, as well as the Disaster Relief Programs around the world.

We appreciate all who came out on Saturday evening and who joined on Sunday for this event. Thank you also to the awesome Bakers! These are just a few of the offerings that were available at the Missions Brunch auction.



HOLIDAY BAZAAR

This has been a very busy week in Fellowship Hall and the kitchen with the last fundraiser of the year and everyone in the Church should be very happy that it was such a successful event. We had great helpers, many bakers, wonderful gifts/items donated for the Silent Auction table, and great items for the White Elephant/Craft Table plus pickles and books for the Country Store. But most of all we would like to thank those that came out that day to make purchases and enjoy the good food.

While we have lost some of our “bakers” over the past year, we are blessed to have our ladies step up and bake more than one item—sometimes multiple items, for our Bake Table. This is really significant as many shoppers are looking for baked items for their Thanksgiving dinners.

Many thanks, the Hospitality Committee



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



The Congregational Meeting was held on Sunday, November 19 following worship. Following some explanation on some areas, the budget was accepted as presented. John Dodson was elected President of the Congregation for 2018.

The **Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 21, 2018** to review the committee and financial reports and to also elect the new members to the church council. The newly elected President will serve a 1 year term, while the newly elected members to the Council will serve a 3-year term.

Thanks to our retiring members for a job well done.

HANGING THE GREENS

We will be decorating the church for the season on Sunday, December 3, following worship. Come and help to “Hang the Greens”. More hands make the work go quicker.





CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR LOCAL FAMILIES IN NEED

Each year, the Salvation Army evaluates the needs of local families and gives us the names, ages, sizes of families who need help with Christmas gifts. We have received the names for this year. Their names, ages, sizes and a few suggestions are posted on a Christmas “Angel Tree ” on display in the Narthex.

Gifts are asked to be wrapped and each package labeled with the person’s first and last name. Please bring them to Church by Sunday, December 10 but no later than Friday, December 15. They will be delivered by the Missions Committee with help from other volunteers (the more the merrier) before Christmas.

Help is needed (Santa hat’s optional) in making these deliveries (volunteers with vans, trucks, or SUV’s). If you can help, please be at the church by 9:30am. Tentative date for deliveries is December 22, however, see Robin Burton for confirmation of the date.

Could you add another person to your Christmas list? Perhaps you and a friend would like to adopt one together and make a day of shopping. Stop by the display in the Narthex and sign up for one of the family members who could use some help this year. Let’s help these families have a better Christmas!



BELLS OF THE BAY IN CONCERT

BELLS OF THE BAY will be presenting “A Christmas Jubilee”, a hand bell performance at Immanuel on Sunday, December 3rd , 4–7:00pm. Good will offering will be appreciated.

FAMILY CHRISTMAS LUNCH

On this Sunday, December 10th we will look for the children of the Sunday School to dress up in their costumes and create a living crèche in the sanctuary during worship. Following worship, we will hold a family Christmas lunch (covered dish) Christian Education will supply main dish, dessert and drinks and Santa may well make an appearance. Plan to join the fun!



CHRISTMAS FUND



For more than 110 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a ministry of compassion and caring by which we - as members of the United Church of Christ and its predecessor denominations - provide a lifeline of hope to many lower-income active and retired clergy and lay employees of our church. Gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide:

Pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees
Emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees
Christmas "Thank You" gift checks to hundreds of annuitants.

Funds are administered through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance and the staff of the Pension Boards and help low-income retirees know that we greatly appreciate their many years of service to Christ's Church.

We will receive our UCC Christmas Fund offering during worship on Sunday, December 17. Gifts can also be sent to the Church Office, with note that it goes to "UCC Christmas Fund."



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Join Pastor Dale, members of Immanuel and others from our community as we celebrate Christmas in prayer and song during our Christmas Eve Service on Sunday, December 24 at 7:00pm

CHRISTMAS CARDS & FAMILY PHOTO TREE

If you would like to send Christmas cards to members of the congregation, please place them in our Christmas card box located in the Narthex by December 17. They will be available for pick up on Christmas Eve in the a.m. through Epiphany. Church will be closed on Monday, Christmas Day.

The CE Board would like to do a "Family Photo Christmas Tree. If you have a family photo (3-1/2x5 or 4x6 horizontal picture) you would like to share, bring it to church by December 10th...or we can take a picture at the Family Christmas Lunch.

NUT AND GOODIE SALE

Once again this year, Beverly Shelly will be offering nuts and goodies for sale to benefit Hoffman Homes for Youth, the local Cold Weather Shelter and Kitty City Rescue. To place your order, contact Beverly Shelly at Cecille's Beauty Salon 410-228-4890.

Nuts: Pecan Halves - \$13; Light Walnuts - \$11.00; Black Walnuts - \$12; Deluxe Nuts (no peanuts) - \$13; Giant Cashews - \$13; Honey Roasted Peanuts - \$5.50; and Whole Roasted Almonds (natural- salted) \$10; Pistachios – Natural Salted \$11.

Chocolate Covered Items:

Bridge Mix w/Milk Chocolate - \$9; Cashews w/Milk Chocolate \$12; Almonds w/Milk Chocolate \$10; Pecans w/Milk Chocolate -\$12; Raisins w/Milk Chocolate \$7; Peanuts w/Milk Chocolate - \$7 and Giant Malted Milk Balls - \$8.

Other Items: Almond-Cranberry Granola - \$8; Praline Pecans \$12; Heart Healthy Nut Mix (Cashews, almonds, cranberries, raisins, sunflower & pumpkin seeds) - \$9.00; Tropical Blend (macadamia, cashew, almond, cranberry & pineapple chunks) - \$9; Gummi Bears \$6.50; Harvest Medley Mix (pecans, pistachios, cashews, cranberries & dried cherries) - \$12; Mint Meltaways \$10; Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramels \$10; Dark Chocolate Peanut Butter Melts w/Sea Salt \$10.

All items are 16 oz. packages.

FAMILY WATERFOWL HUNT

Plans are underway for our Waterfowl Hunt which will take place on Saturday, January 13, 2018. Registration will begin at 5:15am. The cost will be \$80 (continental breakfast, hunt and lunch); \$50 for youth 16 and under (must be accompanied by an adult). You may also come for lunch only (donation accepted and welcomed). Contact Jock Luthy 410-463-0985; Robin Burton 443-521-7869 or the church office 410-228-4640 if you have questions or would like to have a registration form mailed to you.



STEWARDSHIP CORNER

LAST DAY TO MAKE DONATIONS FOR 2017. ALL CHURCH GIFTS AND OFFERINGS FOR 2017 MUST BE IN BY DECEMBER 31 TO BE COUNTED FOR 2017. OUR BOOKS WILL BE CLOSED THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 31. This is necessary in order to get year-end financial reports completed.

As we come to December, there may be some of you who have thought about giving a contribution to Immanuel Church, but just did not get around to it. Please reconsider and send your gift for God's work before the books are closed December 31 by 11am in the church office. Thank you to all who have given so generously of your time, talents and finances throughout the year. When we all help, we can keep Immanuel strong and be the Church that God would have us be.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

As 2017 draws to a close, committee reports are needed for the Annual Meeting in January. Please have your reports into the office, either by email: info@immanuelucc.com (preferred) or leave them on the secretary's desk. I would like to have **ALL reports no later than January 7**. This will allow enough time to prepare the booklet and make the necessary copies prior to the Annual Meeting on January 21, 2018.

Janice Haller, Church Secretary

Poinsettia Order Form



\$6.50 Per Plant - Specify Color Red____ White____ Jingle bell (red & white mixture)____

Please complete the order form below, put your money in the attached envelope and put, in the secretary's in-box in the office or place in Immanuel's locked mailbox by December 11th. Please take your poinsettia home after our Christmas Eve worship service on Saturday, Dec. 24.

(underline one) In Honor / In Loving Memory of (need more room- use reverse side):

Given
by _____

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

December Birthdays

Lisa Marshall	12/2
Marie Schott	12/3
Bill Malkus	12/3
Bill Giese	12/4
Christie Wheatley	12/4
Logan Middleton	12/5
Ryan Jones	12/6
Cindy Jones	12/9
Ellie Anderson	12/9
Dolores Dixon	12/13
Lorna Seymour	12/15
Janice Haller	12/16
Philip Jackson, Sr	12/20
Beattie McCarter	12/26
Sam Shelly	12/26
Christopher Jones	12/27
Crystal Windsor	12/28
Amanda Jackson	12/31

December Anniversaries)

Kelly & Paul Jackson	12/2
Carole & Roger Segar	12/2
Christy & John Ashton	12/5
Beth & Bill Giese	12/8
Kristina & Garrett Luthy	12/12
Diana & Philip Jackson, Sr.	12/24
Ruth & Kit Bradley	12/27
Lynne & John Breil	12/27
Barbara & Al Bailey	12/28

Your Staff

The Rev. Dale Krotee
Janice Haller
J. Curtis White
Lynne Breil
Stephanie Carmine

Pastor
Church Secretary
Choir Director/Organist
Pianist
Nursery Care Provider

Your Church Council

Dr. Donald Rae - President

Danny Luthy
John Dodson
Kim Leonard
Kim Bair
Tom Wilkison

Lynn Malkus-Lyons
Charlotte Hanson
Mary Mistrangelo
Dennis Jones

Church Contact Information

Office Hours - Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Phone: 410-228-4640 FAX: 410-221-6419

E-mail: info@immanuelucc.com;

pastor@immanuelucc.com

IMMANUEL PRAYER LIST: You are invited to remember these people in prayer

Members of Immanuel:

Dorothy BURTON, health issues, at Mallard Bay
Norma Lee BURTON, broken hip, recovering at home
Wylie & Shirley BURTON, Robin Burton's parents, health issues
Bill FOXWELL, facing health challenges
Evan KOZAK, undergoing treatment for Perthes disease
Helen MALKUS, health issues, at home
Doris RAE, health issues at home
Elsa SCHNOOR, health issues, at home
Irene TAYLOR, health issues, at Bayleigh Chase-room 28

Friends of Immanuel Church:

The family of Kenny ELZEY, Julia Newman's father, on his death Nov. 15
Harold FERGESON, friend of Bette Adams & Sherry Hofer,
Health issues at home
Judy SMITH, friend of Bette Adams & Sherry Hofer, health
Issues at home
Joe Franklin SPILLMAN, Frank's brother, health issues

Other Prayer Requests:

Guidance in Immanuel's leaders for 2017 and beyond

Members and Friends Serving in Our Armed Forces:

Christopher ANTENEN, U. S. Air Force, now stationed in the USA,
grand-nephew of Jean Haddaway
Buddy HAYDEN, friend of Robin Burton, enlisted in U.S. Air Force
Timothy Scott MOXEY, JR., U. S. Navy, stationed in San Diego, grandson
of Debi & Jay Book. Great-grandson of the late Ted Malkus
Thomas PARENT, U. S. Army, friend of George & Connie Barnett,
serving in Colorado
Keagan ROSARIO, U.S. Air Force, friend of Kim Leonard, now
Stationed in the U.S.
Matthew L. RUBLE, II, U.S. Army, nephew of Michal Dixon,
stationed in Iraq
Seth M. RUBLE, U. S. Air Force, nephew of Michal Dixon, stationed
in Seattle, WA
Jimmy WINDSOR, U. S. Army, stationed in Arizona



IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
5401 White Hall Road
Cambridge, Maryland 21613
410-228-4640 email: info@immanuelucc.com
Return Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 150
CAMBRIDGE, MD
21613



FROM OUR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION BOARD

Come join us on **December 10** for our **Annual Christmas Family lunch following worship!** The CE Board will supply the main course and dessert. We welcome any side dishes (salads, vegetable platters, etc.) that you would like to bring. Our meal will begin directly following worship, and will include a visit from Santa Claus. Come enjoy our fellowship and celebrating Jesus' Birthday!

