



PARISH NEWS

FEBRUARY 2022

People of God,

Groundhogs are among nature's more adorable meteorologists. If they weren't so cute, perhaps we might spend more time wondering whether a prognosticating rodent really has the credentials to be a major figure in predicting whether spring is coming, or if winter will continue to drag on long after it has worn out its welcome.

Yet for as long as I can remember, each February we look to the humble groundhog for guidance, seeking a sign of hope that shorter nights and warmer days are just around the corner. Hope like that can keep us going, even when we reach our breaking point, or when trusting in hope seems foolish or silly (like trusting that Punxsutawney Phil will be 135 years old this year when the average lifespan of a groundhog is six years).



Yes, the whole Groundhog Day ritual seems strange if you think too hard about it, but the shadow of the rodent isn't as important as the hope of change that he embodies. Even when he does hide from his shadow, all but guaranteeing an extended winter, that moment comes with the hope that, within six weeks, the seasons will turn. New life will again sprout from the slumbering earth, and spring will bloom again.

Perhaps I pay more attention to groundhogs than most people, but I think we could use that kind of hope today. For two years, we've endured a long winter of COVID-19. There are days when it seems like the pandemic will never end, that omicron will see its shadow and we'll have six more weeks of pandemic shutdowns and physical distancing.

Yet despite all the challenges of living through a pandemic, we still have hope. Hope that the world can get better. Hope that this pandemic will end. Hope that, together, we can make it through tough times, even when it feels like we've hit our breaking point.

(continued, next page)

(Pastor's message, continued)

Read on in this issue of *Parish News* to learn about signs of hope among us. They include the blessing of new life in our congregation and the opportunity to participate in Immanuel's Annual Meeting, during which you'll hear how we will move forward into this new year of ministry.

We have many reasons for hope, chief among them that God is among us and within us, bringing new life to the world.

In Peace,
Pastor Micah Sievenpiper

WORSHIP IN PERSON OR ONLINE

As Christ welcomes us, we welcome all to worship, which begins at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday. All in-person services in the sanctuary also are streamed live on Immanuel's YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/immanuelkansascity>.

Scripture readings during February continue to highlight unlikely people and circumstances that reveal God's glory and give fresh perspective on who might be "blessed ones." We are reminded that we, too, are blessed, and we are called to show God's glory.

New this month: If you participate via YouTube, you can view and download the worship bulletin and parish announcements for the day. Both are available in the new Bulletins and Parish Announcements section of Immanuel's website, which you'll find at <https://immanuelkc.org/bulletins-and-announcements>. You'll also find a link to them in the description below the YouTube video window when you log in on Sundays.



To limit health risk during worship or other events and activities at Immanuel, please:

- Do not attend if you have tested positive for COVID-19, have experienced COVID-like symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) or have had close contact with someone who has tested positive within the past 14 days.
- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth.
- Practice safe hygiene (e.g., coughing or sneezing into your elbow.)

TOP 10 REASONS TO LOG IN TO IMMANUEL'S ANNUAL MEETING



Immanuel's 2022 Annual Meeting will be called to order at 11:30 a.m., Sunday, Feb. 13, via Zoom. Here are the **Top 10 Reasons to log in.**

#10: It's on Zoom, so you can **wear slippers and sweatpants.**

#9: You'll get to **express gratitude** to outgoing congregation council members, committee chairs and other volunteers, and **applaud** the people who will replace them.

#8: You'll learn how carefully the Immanuel staff and congregation members **controlled expenses** during 2021.

#7: You'll hear the **grand total of financial donations** to Immanuel during 2021. **(Spoiler Alert: It's good news!)**

#6: You'll learn how much the **Endowment Trust Fund (ETF) grew** during 2021 and **how much Immanuel withdrew** from the ETF to cover 2021 ministry expenses. **(Spoiler Alert: More good news!)**

#5: You'll already be home — or will have plenty of time to get home — so you can **watch the Super Bowl.**

#4: You'll learn about Immanuel's **2021 benevolence giving to ministry partners** outside our walls.

#3: You'll hear about property projects that helped **maintain and beautify our facility** during 2021, and learn about important repairs and maintenance on tap for 2022.

#2: If you're there, you **won't risk being unknowingly nominated and elected** to serve as president of the congregation.

And the #1 reason to log in to the Annual Meeting:

You'll get to join in prayer with Immanuel friends as we ask the Holy Spirit for guidance during Immanuel's 123rd year of ministry.

You can begin logging in at 11 a.m., Sunday, Feb. 13:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5143355703>

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

If you are new to Zoom or have questions about logging in to the meeting, contact Pastor Micah, msievenpiper@gmail.com or 816-931-8483.

CELEBRATE NEW LIFE AT IMMANUEL

Single roses on the altar during Jan. 16 and Jan. 30 worship services honored babies born into the Immanuel family during January.

Graham Zabel Carey, son of Mason and Kayla Carey, was born Jan. 12. Mason serves on the Congregation Council and Mutual Ministry Committee. Kayla is an active Steering Committee member.



Graham Zabel Carey

Winnie Sue Williams, daughter of Cody and Samantha Williams, was born Jan. 17. Mom Samantha, grandmom Mindy Rash and aunt Amanda Rash are lifelong Immanuel members who have participated and served in many important ways. They all follow in the footsteps of great-grandparents Dick and Jackie Turner.



Winnie Sue Williams

We thank God for the precious blessing of new life among us. We pray that God will bless the new parents, and that Graham and Winnie will come to know that they are deeply, wholly and forever loved – first by God and then by us.

MEET PHILLIP COOPER, IMMANUEL'S NEW BUILDING SUPERINTENDENT



Phillip Cooper, our new building superintendent, joined the Immanuel staff Jan. 13. He is responsible for cleaning our building and setting up for events.

A Kansas City native, Phillip grew up in the 18th and Vine district and, while his parents and sister now live in Liberty and Parkville, he still loves living in the central city with his significant other, Rachel Morgan.

Phillip earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Lincoln University and previously coordinated the alternative suspension program for the Kansas City, Missouri, Public Schools (KCPS). He then joined corporate America as a general manager for Jiffy Lube.

(continued, next page)

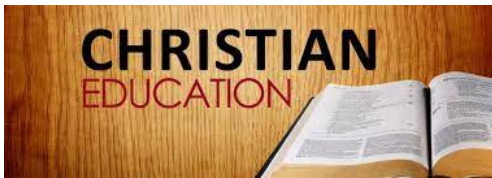
(Meet Phillip Cooper, continued)

Several years ago, kidney failure, dialysis and an eventual kidney transplant led Phillip to seek employment that offered more flexibility. During 2018, he joined the KCPS custodial team, a position he still holds today.

"I originally applied for the position at Immanuel because it parallels work in which I already have experience, and I really wanted to serve in a faith-based, friendly environment," he says. "I feel great positive energy here. Everyone is helpful, and happy to answer questions or offer guidance. I feel comfortable and welcome."

Phillip works variable hours at Immanuel, but you can contact him any time through the church office or by emailing pcoopq@yahoo.com.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUE FOR KIDS AND ADULTS



Immanuel Sunday School families receive lessons each week via email. Kids gather periodically after worship in Luther Hall, but families currently are a bit anxious about the COVID-19 omicron variant, so most learning

currently occurs through the lessons at home. Contact Suzanne Steffen, suzannesteffen7@gmail.com, with suggestions or questions.

Adult Forum begins 15 minutes after Sunday worship in Spong Common Room. Here's the Adult Forum schedule for February:

Feb. 6 — Can We Talk About Guns?, a discussion led by Don Arney that draws on research resources, including the *Kansas City Star* series about gun violence

Feb. 13 — No Adult Forum: Log in to the Annual Meeting, which will be called to order at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom

Feb. 20 — Overview of major themes in the Gospel According to St. Luke

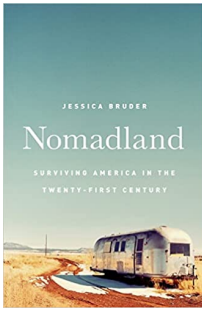
Feb. 27 — How The Gospel According to Saint Luke Addresses Social Justice, a lectionary study for the week of Ash Wednesday

PLEASE SIGN UP TO HOST COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP TIME

Could you offer hospitality to your Immanuel friends by hosting coffee/fellowship time? It's an important time for gathering and conversation and, because Immanuel provides the coffee and treats, it's an easy way to serve. Please sign up on the bulletin board in the main sanctuary-level hallway or contact the church office, office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483, to volunteer.



FRIENDS OF LITERATURE MEETS TO DISCUSS *NOMADLAND*



Friends of Literature will meet at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 10, at the home of Don and Mary Arney to discuss *Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century*, by Jessica Bruder.

All are welcome! To request the Friends of Literature Zoom link if you can't attend in person, contact Don, 816-918-5371 or 22sora@gmail.com.

Bruder, an American journalist, chronicles the phenomenon of older Americans who, following the Great Recession from 2007 to 2009, adopted transient lifestyles as they traveled around the United States in desperate search of seasonal work. The book was made into a multi-award-winning film starring Frances McDormand.

FEBRUARY WELCA STUDY REVIEWS GOVERNMENT 101 FOR FAITHFUL PEOPLE

A look at Government 101 for people of faith is on tap for the WELCA study and gathering, 1 p.m., Wednesday, Feb 16. Pastor Ann Rundquist, Immanuel ministry assistant and pastor at Gathering Table, will lead the discussion.



You can participate face-to-face in Spong Common Room or join via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5143355703>

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

Questions? Contact Pastor Ann, pastorannrundquist@gmail.com or 785-643-7697.

WHEN IT SNOWS, LET'S HELP PASTOR SHOVEL

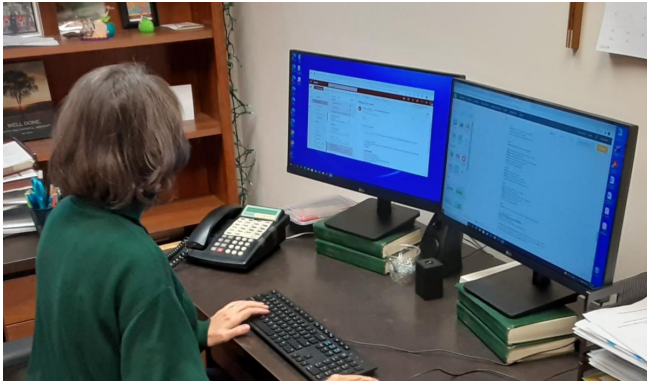
Because of a labor shortage, the company that clears snow from Immanuel's parking areas can't shovel our sidewalks.

The ongoing search for a company or individual who can shovel for Immanuel has not been successful so far, so please contact Linda at office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483 if you know of a company or individual who could help.



In the meantime, Pastor Micah has volunteered to shovel, and he would appreciate your help. The next time snow is on the ground on a Sunday morning and if you are able, grab your shovel and join him at 8:45 a.m. to clear the way to Immanuel's entrances.

NEW COMPUTERS ADD EFFICIENCY, SECURITY TO CHURCH OPERATIONS



Following more than a year of planning, budgeting and evaluating, four new computers and a new network drive were installed in the church office last month.

The new computers replace the old laptop that had been used by Pastor Micah, as well as the desktop systems in the ministry assistant office, administrative assistant office

and at the reception desk. The new network drive, a first for Immanuel, ensures that files designated for use by more than one of Immanuel's computer users will remain visible even when one or more of the computers is turned off.

In addition to the new hardware, new software already is increasing efficiency and security, and comes with a full slate of new passwords.

The old system that had been in the administrative assistant office now is available in Office 2 (formerly the Learning, Youth and Family office), where it can be used as necessary, especially during the transition to the new equipment.

NEWS FROM YOUR CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Brian Thomas and Jean Nuernberger led a discussion about the proposed 2022 budget for ministry. The budget will be presented to the congregation during the Jan. 30 Adult Forum and during the Annual Meeting. The Council thanked the members of the Finance Committee for their hard work and for creating an easily understood budget document.



Terry Kueker gave an update about Immanuel's boiler system. The circulation pump that provides heat to roughly half of the church, excluding the Luther Hall addition, recently required repair. The repair technician discovered that the boiler is showing signs of future failure, and we were advised to consider replacing it during warm-weather months so as to avoid an outage during next year's winter. Design Mechanical, Inc., will provide replacement cost estimates. Boiler replacement will be an item of discussion during the Feb. 13 Annual Meeting.

(continued, next page)

(News from Congregation Council, continued)

Although year-end financial numbers are not yet available, Rick Sundell reported that, due to multiple special gifts and revenue appeals, we may end the year with as much as a \$130,000 revenue surplus, from which Immanuel would designate a 10 percent tithe. Following discussion, Council suggested that half of the tithe be applied to the necessary upkeep of the church so that we can continue to offer our facility for use by external organizations that serve the community in multiple ways. The Social Ministry Committee will determine how to distribute the remaining 50 percent of the tithe.

Purple Dragon Daycare proposed amending its existing lease with Immanuel to include a two-year extension while all other lease conditions remain the same. Following discussion, the Council approved extending the lease agreement through July 2024. The lease document will receive a legal review and then be signed.

FEBRUARY SCRIPTURE READINGS AND WORSHIP LEADERS

2/6

First Reading: Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]

Psalmody: Psalm 138

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Gospel: Luke 5:1-11

Assisting Minister: Vicki Swanson

Psalmist: John Anderson

Communion Steward: Rick Sundell

Altar Committee: Ellen Wilcox, Karen Bame

Media: Kevin Fewell

Ushers: Milan Hanson, Terry & Lori Kueker

2/13

First Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Psalmody: Psalm 1

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Gospel: Luke 6:17-26

Assisting Minister: Melodee Blobaum

Psalmist: Lauren Park

Communion Steward: Linda Fox

Altar Committee: Ellen Wilcox, Karen Bame

Media: Jack Friedrich

Ushers: Ken Beckmann, Josie Yungeberg, Connie Ross

(continued, next page)

(February Scripture Readings and Worship Leaders, continued)

2/20

First Reading: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Psalmody: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

Gospel: Luke 6:27-38

Assisting Minister: Bryan Park

Psalmist: Beth Callstrom

Communion Steward: Karen Bame

Altar Committee: Bonnie Thomas, Karen Bame

Media: Linda Fox

Ushers: Rick Wilcox, Scott Thompson, Hastings Family

2/27

First Reading: Exodus 34:29-35

Psalmody: Psalm 99

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:12, 4:2

Gospel: Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]

Assisting Minister: Linda Taylor

Psalmist: Megan Sawyer

Communion Steward: Melodee Blobaum

Altar Committee: Bonnie Thomas, Karen Bame

Media: Milan Hanson

Ushers: Dee Craig, BJ Laven

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Here's a look at upcoming events that will take place at Immanuel or via Zoom:

Jan. 28

3:30 p.m. World Folk Dancers, Luther Hall

Jan. 29

9:30 a.m. Shin Do Ryu Karate, Luther Hall

10 a.m. Prayer Team, Spong

Jan. 30

9:30 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary

10:15 a.m. Refreshments and Fellowship, Luther Hall

10:30 a.m. Sunday School, Luther Hall

10:30 a.m. Adult Forum, Spong

3 p.m. OA-KC, Gathering Space



(continued, next page)

(Calendar of Events, continued)

Jan. 31

5:30 p.m. Youth Chorus, Sanctuary, Luther Hall, Spong, Gathering Space

Feb. 1

10 a.m. Coffee & Conversation via Zoom

5 p.m. Soundwave, Gathering Space

6 p.m. Immanuel Executive Committee via Zoom

7:30 p.m. Immanuel Stewardship Committee via Zoom

Feb. 3

6:30 p.m. Choral Spectrum, Luther Hall

7 p.m. OA-KC, Gathering Space

7 p.m. Social Ministry Committee via Zoom

Feb. 4

3:30 p.m. World Folk Dancers, Luther Hall

Feb. 5

8:30 a.m. Altar Guild, Spong

9:30 a.m. Choral Spectrum, Sanctuary

9:30 a.m. Shin Do Ryu Karate, Luther Hall

10 a.m. Worship & Arts Committee via Zoom

Feb. 6

8:15 a.m. Music Rehearsal, Luther Hall

9:30 a.m. Worship, Sanctuary

10:15 a.m. Refreshments and Fellowship, Luther Hall

10:30 a.m. Sunday School, Luther Hall

10:30 a.m. Adult Forum, Spong

3 p.m. OA-KC, Gathering Space

Feb. 7

5:30 p.m. Youth Chorus, Sanctuary, Luther Hall, Spong, Gathering Space

Join An Event Via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5143355703>

Meeting ID: 514 335 5703

One tap mobile: +13017158592, 5143355703# US

Visit <https://immanuelkc.org/calendar> to view the full calendar of upcoming events at Immanuel. If you have questions or would like to add an event to the calendar, contact the church office, 816-931-8483 or office@immanuelkc.org.

MORE NEWS TO USE



FREE COVID TESTING

You can get a free COVID-19 test at several metro locations, including KC Shepherd's Center, which is in the Loretto building at 111 W. 39th St., Suite 200, Kansas City, MO, 64111. Register at

<https://brightstaropk.e-ppe.com/index.jspa>.

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Our work together matters — to each other and to the wider community. Your contributions help Immanuel do its work. You may give by:

- Placing contributions in the offering plate on Sundays.
- Mailing checks to the church, 1700 Westport Road, Kansas City, MO, 64111.
- Donating online through Tithe.ly, <https://signup.tithe.ly/>.
- Setting up an automatic payment through your financial institution.



Additional ways to support Immanuel include Amazon Smile, <https://smile.amazon.com/> — simply register, and Amazon will donate a percentage of what you spend to Immanuel with every purchase you make. Thank you for your continued giving to Immanuel! Questions? Please contact the church office, office@immanuelkc.org or 816-931-8483.



CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED FEB. 21

The Immanuel office will be closed on Presidents Day, Monday, Feb. 21.

LIKE AND FOLLOW THE IMMANUEL FACEBOOK PAGE

If you use Facebook, check the Immanuel Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/ImmanuelLutheranChurchKC>, for photos and information about congregational life and ministry at Immanuel, including weekly postings about Sunday worship. You then can share that information with your Facebook friends.



THINKING OF ONE ANOTHER



Your prayers, calls, notes and cards can brighten someone's day.

Members of Immanuel

Tracy Atherton, Larry Benolkin, Joe & Lori Clanin, Rick Crawford, Andree Cuthbertson, Pat Durie, Ann Erickson, Peg Himebaugh, Naomi

Karmeier, Dottie Keough, Rev. Keith Klockau, Wilbur and Gerry Niewald, Betty Pera, Deanne Schlehuder and Carolyn Wilson

(continued, next page)

(Thinking of One Another, continued)

Friends of Immanuel

Baby Reylyn & Family, friends of Peggy Dollard

Bakeberg Family, friends of Betty Pera

Pinky Brauer, sister-in-law of Carolyn Brauer

Brian, friend of Linda Setterburg

Family & Friends of Susan Butricks, aunt of Traci Ellis

James, Jim and Ethel Clanin, family of Lori Clanin

Aerial Crow & James Brown, family of Jean Nuernberger

Joanna Dollase, mother of Ellen Wilcox

Chloe & Carley Engler, great-nieces of Sally Baehni

Jennifer Gougo, volunteer at Gathering Table

Troy Green, brother-in-law of Marc & Patti Winkler

Kurt Hanneman, friend of Bill & Mary Jo Moore

Lee Hass, grandmother of Catie Tomlin

Jerri Hatteberg, friend of Deborah Crawford

Normajean Holtje, cousin of Mike Ortmann

Laura Winkler Johnson, aunt of Marc & Patti Winkler

Shelley Johnson, niece of Karole Jacobsen

Kkayley Knubson, great-niece of Karole Jacobsen

Margaret Kohler, aunt of Lori Clanin

Betty Kueker, mother of Terry Kueker

Chris McCallum, nephew of Mike Ortmann

Erin Melican, family of Jean Nuernberger

Pam Moore, sister-in-law of Bill & Mary Jo Moore

Nancy's mother, friend of Linda Setterburg

Ken & Rose Nuernberger, family of Jean Nuernberger

Norma Pera, sister of Roland Pera

Rev. Bill Peterson, friend of Pastor Ann Rundquist

Judy Robinson, friend of Mary Jo Moore

Harry Roth, friend of Henrik Andersen

Rev. Ann Rundquist, Immanuel ministry assistant

Beth Shepard, sister of Patti Winkler

Janet & Randy Spicer, friends of Mary Lynn Coleman-Renoe

David Strum, friend of Bill & Mary Jo Moore

Paula Weir, friend of Betty Pera

Anne Wiedenkeller, friend of Immanuel & Gathering Table

Women of Westport Oxford House (Genesee Residence), friends of Immanuel

BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS

2/1 Ann Olson
2/5 Elizabeth Harris
2/6 Megan Sawyer
2/7 Ted Moore
2/9 Naomi Karmeier
2/10 Bill Gassen
2/11 Sally Baehni
2/12 Randy Callstrom
2/12 Anthony Mazza
2/14 Clark Simonich
2/15 Brenda Kumm
2/15 Audrey Pfeiffer
2/16 Nam Ahrens
2/17 Bennett Kumm

2/18 Vivian Kieslich
2/20 Sutton Callstrom
2/20 Carol Powers
2/21 Lori Kueker
2/22 Don Arney
2/22 Kevin Fewell
2/22 Mae Harris
2/22 Wilbur Niewald
2/22 Bonnie Thomas
2/22 Josie Yungeberg
2/23 Everett Hedeem
2/23 Nathan Kennedy
2/26 Evan Atherton
2/28 Rebecca Turner

IMMANUEL LEADERSHIP

STAFF

Rev. Micah Sievenpiper, pastor
msievenpiper@gmail.com
Rev. Ann Rundquist, ministry assistant
pastorannrundquist@gmail.com
Suzanne Anderson, music director
suzanneandersonilc@gmail.com
Robert Barthel, organist
Robert.Barthel@hotmail.com
Linda Fewell, administrative assistant
office@immanuelkc.org
Phillip Cooper, building superintendent
pcoopq@yahoo.com

COUNCIL

Connie Benolkin, president
Bonnie Thomas, vice president
Terry Kueker, secretary
Kathy Linder, treasurer
Rick Sundell, financial secretary
Henrik Andersen
Melodee Blobaum
Randy Callstrom
Mason Carey
Deborah Crawford
Kate Hauber
Lynden Peters
Sara Prem

PARISH NEWS

A monthly publication of Immanuel Lutheran Church

1700 Westport Road
Kansas City, MO 64111

www.immanuelkc.org
office@immanuelkc.org

816-931-8483

Submit articles or information by the 15th of each month for the upcoming issue.