



New Years Resolutions

Thoughts from Pastor Scott

Resolutions... You know, the promises you make to yourself at the beginning of the year that you plan to keep. I can remember resolutions I've made but never kept. But, I believe New Year's resolutions are worth making and here's why.

First, we all need changes. There's great power in confession--to ourselves, to God, to others. Owning up to our failures is the first major step on the road to something better.

Second, as we enter 2021 it's a good time for reassessment. How did last year go? What do I want to do differently this year? Let me ask you a serious question. What percentage of your life is producing something of value to God and how much of your life will remain the same as it was in 2020?

Third, New Year's is an excellent time for mid-course corrections. Sure, we might fail in what we set out to do, but if we fail to plan then we plan to fail. One of my heroes in the Bible is the Apostle Paul. Talk about a failure! Throughout his life he was opposed, persecuted, shipwrecked, stoned and left for dead, deserted by trusted co-workers, slandered, and scorned. Sometimes it seemed that projects to which he had devoted years were turning to dust before his eyes. But during from one of his times in prison, we can see from one of his letters an unwillingness to quit. "Forgetting what is behind," he wrote, "and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil 3:13-14, NIV) No wonder he made a mark on his world. He stopped looking back, and looked forward instead. He didn't let the fear of failure keep him from trying again.

Fourth, New Year's is a time to learn to rely more heavily on the grace of God. Trusting in God's help is a great way to get through life. One more secret from the Apostle Paul: "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength," he said (Philippians 4:13, NIV). And God's strength saw him through a lot--through pain, through joy, and through accomplishment.

If you didn't practice relying on God as much as you could have in 2020, there's no time like the present to make a New Year's resolution. Think of some of the changes you'd like to see in your life in 2021 and place them in God's hands. Great! Now, you've got a much better chance of a Happy New Year.

God is with us... Pastor Scott

An Invitation to Three Days of Prayer January 5-7, 2021

God is listening. He really is. God says, "You will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you" (Jeremiah 29:12). This is His promise to each of us. For three days in January, join thousands of others around the world from our network of churches (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) for intentional prayer for ourselves, our churches, and our world. If you are on social media, follow along with the LCMC's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/lcmc.net>) or on Twitter at **#LCMC3DOP** Each day there is a theme and items to pray for throughout that day. Take the invitation. God is listening.

Tuesday, January 5 Prayer for Ourselves

Praise: for a new day and a new day with Jesus

Work/School: thank God for your job/opportunity to learn, pray for your co-workers/classmates
Spiritual Growth: that you would grow in love, joy, peace, and patience

Guidance: for the little decisions and the big ones

Repentance: ask forgiveness for your sins and make plans to change with God's help

Finances: for wisdom, generosity, blessing, and contentment

Family: spouse, kids, parents, siblings, and other relatives

Friends: thank God for your friends, ask Him to bless them, and for you to be a good friend

Health: thanksgiving for your body, protection for illness, and healing

Activities: that God would work through you in your hobbies, volunteering, and other activities

Learning: that you would grow in knowledge of God's Word and His world

Hope and Vision: a strong sense that God is with you and that He has plans for your life

Rest: for good rhythms of work and rest, a good night's sleep

Wednesday, January 6 Prayer for our Church

Children's Ministry: the children, their families, Suzy and other teachers

"Behind the Scenes" ministers: communion servers, funeral lunch team, ushers, greeters, etc.

Confirmation Ministry: the students, their families, and Pastor Scott

Vacation Bible School – those who help with VBS this Summer in 2021, the children and their families

Local and Global Missions: that God would use us to bless others and help them know Jesus

Adult Discipleship in Sunday School: the adult students and the discussions that happen

Worship Ministries: for all parts of worship to bring glory to God and transformation to His people

Immanuel's Finances: for faithful, generous, and cheerful giving

Youth Ministry: the students, their families, and the adults who will help with things like a lock-in, snow sledding party, Boundary Waters Canoe Trip, etc.

Immanuel's Church Council and Committees: for wisdom and vision

Immanuel's church members and friends: for transformation, protection, guidance, health

Thursday, January 7 Prayer for Our World

Thanksgiving: for God's plan of salvation, sending Jesus & the Holy Spirit

The Nations: those who suffer from poverty, injustice, oppression, war, and disease

Government: our President, Congress, Supreme Court, Governor, state legislature, local leaders

Military and Civil Servants: all branches of armed forces, fire fighters, law enforcement, paramedics, etc

Camp Carol Joy Holling Bible Camp at Ashland: their funding needs, winter events, open staff positions

The Persecuted Church: strength, courage, faithful witness, protection

The Worldwide Church: more missionaries, obedience to God's mission, faithfulness to

God's Word Missionaries: to proclaim the gospel clearly, follow the Spirit's leading, protection; emotional, physical, and spiritual health; integrity, joy, provision

Mission Partners: Backpack Program, Lutheran Institute of Theology, Lutheran World Relief, Samaritan's Purse, etc.

Schools: the students, their families, teachers, administration

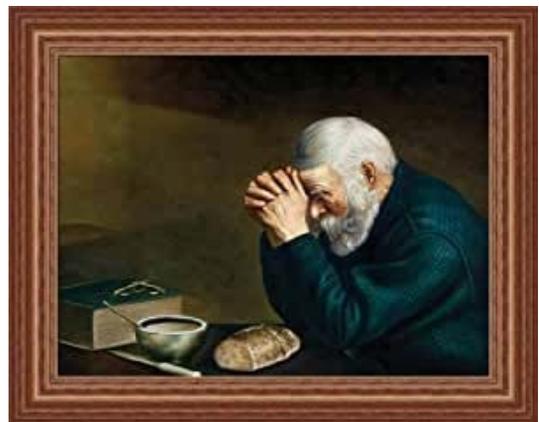
Marriages and Families: for strong, healthy, Christ-centered relationships

Our community of Ceresco and the surrounding area: for transformation, health, freedom, blessing

Everyday Prayer

While there will be three intentional days of prayer during January 5th through 7th, God desires that every day is a day of prayer. "Pray without ceasing," God tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Here are some ideas to make prayer a regular part of your day. Start the morning in prayer. Before you get out of bed, say good morning to God and thank Him for a new day. Pray with your spouse and/or kids before leaving for work/school, asking that God would bless their day. Pray before each task, meeting, or class, asking that God would guide you and give you strength. Pray at each meal, thanking God for providing for your needs. Whenever you hear a siren, stop and pray for those involved. When you see something beautiful, stop and thank God for His creation. When you feel stressed, pause and pray. Let God's peace rule in your heart. Pray with your kids/spouse before bedtime, thanking God for the day, asking forgiveness for your sins, and asking God to give good sleep.





Church Family Meeting

2021 ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING January 24th at 11:15 a.m.

All voting Immanuel members are encouraged to attend this year's annual church meeting, following worship on Sunday, January 26th, in the church sanctuary and online. Voting members are confirmed members of

Immanuel who have communed within the past year. Our alternate snow day is Sunday, January 31st.

Church business will include approval of the 2021 church budget and addressing issues which impact our activities in serving Christ Jesus and His mission. Often, Immanuel's annual meetings have been only 30 minutes to less than an hour in length. We look forward to seeing you there.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL PLANNING MEETING

It's hard to believe but it's that time of year again to begin planning for this summer's 2021 Vacation Bible School. If you are interested in helping with the planning in any

way – crafts, lessons, ideas, or other ways – please plan to attend the VBS planning session online on Zoom on Monday evening, January 25th at 7 p.m. With the upcoming vaccinations for COVID-19, it is likely that we may be able to have VBS in person again this summer – wouldn't that be GREAT?

As Nebraska's health directed protocols are relaxing a bit for the COVID-19 pandemic, we will return to gathering at Immanuel for Sunday School at 9 a.m. beginning Sunday, January 10th.

Children will gather with Suzy in the Fellowship Hall and adults will gather with Pastor Scott in the Church Sanctuary. Adults will also continue to have the online option of joining the study of "A Purpose Driven Life" via Zoom by going to the church's Zoom weblink that we have been using.



Sunday School
MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Please continue to check Immanuel’s church website at www.immanuelceresco.org to see when the church building is open or closed for worship.

We will continue to offer worship online by Zoom at 10:15 a.m. like we’ve been doing for the past months. Our permanent online Zoom link is

<https://zoom.us/j/8780165113>

Please be patient as you log on to worship at 10:15 a.m. or the Adult Sunday School at 9 a.m. since Zoom now requires the “host” to let everyone in from an online “waiting room”.



Our Confirmation classes will resume at Immanuel beginning Wednesday, January 6th at 6 p.m. with supper and a study session with Pastor Scott. This year’s Confirmation students are:

- Jace Badberg
- Kory Ball
- Owen Kreikemeier
- Taylor Oldfield
- Reid Otto
- Hunter and Ashlyn Sykes



**Remembering
Our Homebound Members**

Please remember Immanuel’s homebound members in your prayers:

Barb Basel (Barb is living with her daughter and son-in-law now)

27765 County Rd. 14 – Hooper NE 68031
402.719.4596 (Home) 402.480.2582 (Cell)

John Christiansen

1509 County Rd. B – Ceresco, NE 68017
402.429.6475

Marie Johnson

2425 Folkways Blvd, #336 – Lincoln NE 68521
402.438.5618 (home) 402.417.9537 (cell)

Rose Nelson

Saunders Medical Center Long Term Care, Room 114
1760 County Road J – Wahoo NE 68066

Dale Rexilius

c/o Tabitha GracePointe
4620 Randolph St, #203 – Lincoln NE 68510 402.484.9318

January 2021 Immanuel Calendar

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tues</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thurs</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
3 NO SUNDAY SCHOOL TODAY 10:15 am Worship with Communion. 1 pm Baptism of Caden Heyen at Immanuel	4	5	6 6 pm – Confirmation class supper and session at Immanuel	7	8	9
		1st Day of Prayer	2nd Day of Prayer	3rd Day of Prayer		
10 9 am Sunday School for all ages 10:15 am Worship with Communion 7 pm Church Council meeting online on Zoom	11	12	13 6 pm – Confirmation class supper and session at Immanuel	14	15	16
17 9 am Sunday School for all ages 10:15 am Worship with Communion	18	19	20 6 pm – Confirmation class supper and session at Immanuel	21	22	23
24 9 am Sunday School for all ages 10:15 am Worship with Communion 11:15 am Annual Meeting	25 7 pm Vacation Bible School planning session – online meeting	26	27 6 pm – Confirmation class supper and session at Immanuel	28	29	30
31 9 am Sunday School for all ages 10:15 am Worship with Communion 11:15 am Alternate time for Annual Meeting (bad weather day)						



Prayer List

Christie Bevington
Matthew Weaver
Tim Larson
Lora Robinson
Mike Hnizda
Ralph Black
Amanda Ray
Belinda Basel
Sydney Kenning & Family
Ralph Larson
Malachi Chrans
Heather Lucht
Ron Weltruski
Kim Pearson
Kelly Hamilton
David Sinn
Shelly Hanneman
Mary Tvrdy
JoAnn Koepke
Sharon Breitreutz
Julie & Bruce
Lani Swanson
Makena Garrison
Health & protection for everyone

JANUARY USHERS

Jan.3 - Fran Freeman
Jan. 10 - Christie Bevington
Jan. 17 - Doug & Shawn Rudeen
Jan. 24- Kevin & Gaylene Olson
Jan. 31 - Jon & Janis Bible

JANUARY LECTORS

Jan.3 - Fran Freeman
Jan. 10 - Donna Hansen
Jan. 17 - Shawn Rudeen
Jan. 24- Crystal Haake
Jan. 31 - Janis Bible

January Food Pantry

All kinds of crackers such as Ritz -Wheat thins – Soda – Triscuits– etc. Boxed crackers or snack crackers.