



Advent History



Sadly, however, these days a large number of Advent calendars seem to be a commercialized tradition where consumers can open chocolate, socks, or makeup everyday leading up to Christmas. It's less of a count down and more of a way to have more stuff.

Another Advent tradition is special services, hymns, and prayers. For example, at Immanuel, we hold special Advent services every Wednesday during Advent to focus on the comings of Christ.

Advent is a special time of the year, yet because it comes every year, we might start to take it for granted. We should remember to appreciate the time of year and how important it is.

Advent helps us prepare for celebrating the first coming of Christ while also keeping our fires lite in expectation of the second coming of Christ on that last day. Blessings on your Advent season!

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.” (Micah 5:2)

By: Rebekah Busch

The Season of Advent

Christmas time is approaching quickly, like it does every year. We are now in the middle of celebrating Advent. In 2024, Advent started on Sunday, December 1. The season of Advent also marks the beginning of the church year. The word Advent comes from the Latin word *adventus*, which means “coming.”

The origins of Advent come from the fourth and fifth centuries in Spain and Gaul. Advent was usually a time for people to prepare for baptism, which typically happened on Epiphany. This is a reason why many older baptismal fonts have depictions of the Magi on them.

Over time, Advent as a season varied in length, ranging from about six to even seven weeks long. Around the 12th century, Advent became the four weeks that we know now.

The church focuses on two aspects of Advent, the first being the first coming of Christ and the second being the second coming of Christ. The first is the celebration of the time leading up to Christmas, when Christ was born.

Christian Church History

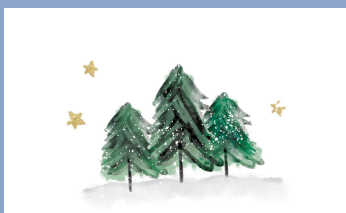
The second coming is the looking forward to the second coming of Christ on the Last Day, Judgement Day. In many churches, the first two weeks of Advent are spent focusing on the second coming of Christ, and the last two weeks are focused on Christ's birth.

Another aspect of Advent is a focus on contrasts. There is one main contrast that is focused on during Advent: darkness and light, or death and life. When Jesus was born, he cast away the darkness/death to save us. He is the light/life of the world.

Christians all over the world celebrate Advent, so this has created many Advent traditions. For example, one tradition is having four candles that are lit every week. The first candle is called the Prophecy Candle. The second is called the Bethlehem Candle. The third is called the Shepherd's Candle. The fourth is called the Angel's candle. At our church, we have a fifth candle in the middle that is lit on Christmas Eve, called the Christ Candle.

Another Advent tradition is Advent calendars. These usually start at the beginning of Advent and count down the days until Christmas.

Christmas Tree



Lot

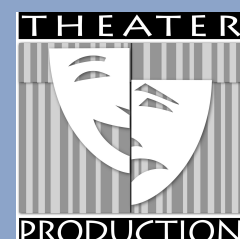
Sophomores selling Christmas Trees! Page 2

Basketball



Begins

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Drama Recap

Enter any information and where the story can be found.



Ladies of Immanuel, you are invited to an
Advent Afternoon

December 8

from 2 - 4pm in the church basement

Join us as we look forward to the birth of our Savior through some devotional readings and hymns.

We'll enjoy fellowship time over coffee and cocoa, as well as work together on a special project for families that have a child in the NICU.

Please bring a favorite Christmas treat to share

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12/7 Home Game Girls 7-9th @ 11am
- 12/7 Home Game BJV @ 12:15pm
- 12/7 Home Game GV @ 1:30pm
- 12/7 Home Game BV @ 3pm
- 12/12 Spelling Bee
- 12/12 Home Game GV @ 6:30pm
- 12/12 Home Game BV @ 8pm
- 12/13 Newspaper Club Meeting
- 12/16 Home Game GV @ 4pm
- 12/16 Home Game BV @ 5:30pm
- 12/17 Christmas Concert @ 7pm
- 12/20 Early Release
- 12/23-1/3 Christmas Break

Evening Ambassadors

Bible Study

Cookies Gifts Exchange

December 18th
7-9pm

Bring your Bible & a 'white elephant' gift

JOIN US!

Meeting in the Church Fellowship Hall

Questions? Ask Mrs. Hilary Lien

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Christmas Tree Lot

Every autumn, the sophomore class hosts an evergreens fundraiser to raise money for their class trip to Washington D.C. The fundraiser consists of different assortments of evergreens, typically wreaths, spruce tips, and garlands, but this year not only did they offer those, they are also selling Christmas trees.

Mr. Benjamin Hanel traveled up to Northern Michigan to cut and transport these trees down to Mankato! They are beautiful, healthy trees that would smell divine in your home.

Their tree lot is located at the Barnes and Noble Mall Parking Lot until **December 15th**. We hope you check them out!

By: Leah Dick

This is a great opportunity to support the sophomore class and bring home a beautiful evergreen tree for the Christmas season!



Senior Spotlight

Our senior spotlight for December is none other than Rebekah Busch. Rebekah has attended Immanuel since kindergarten. After high school Rebekah is not sure exactly where she will go, but she wants to do something with math and science. She also stated there are a lot of fields in those subjects, and she's trying to narrow it down before making a decision about higher education. After she graduates, she is looking forward to new experiences and learning new things, and also relaxing a bit before college. So far Rebekah's senior year has been good but also very busy and stressful. Her favorite part so far is being able to play sports again after her knee surgery last year, "It's nice to finish off high school playing to the best of my ability."

Her biggest challenges are figuring out where she wants to go for college and what to major in, along with being busy with sports and homework. When asked what advice she would give to new high schoolers, she said, "Work hard and challenge yourself, you're capable of more than you think you are. Try new things. Make memories with your friends."

Her favorite class has been Pre-calculus her junior year saying, "It taught me how to work hard and that sometimes you have to do things you don't want to, but it is worth it in the end." Finally, her favorite memory is doing track and field, because it's a co-op with other schools. She said it's nice to have different experiences, meet new friends, and try a new sport. May God be with you always, Rebekah!

By: Leah Dick



Devotional

Reading: Luke 2:1-40

Christmas is my absolute favorite time of year. I get so excited for all of the time spent with family, and the food - specifically all the amazing Christmas cookies that my family makes. I love the movies, hot chocolate, lights, traditions, and the music. I absolutely love this holiday. But as I've gotten older, I've really realized that while all of the things I mentioned are fun, that is not why we should be so excited, and it's not why we should look forward to Christmas. It's a great part of the holiday, but it's not what we should be focusing on.

Specifically this year, I've really been thinking about why we celebrate Christmas every year and why we celebrate the way we do. The reason we should give gifts is to remind people of the greatest gift anyone could ever give us, Jesus. We decorate trees and homes with lights because Jesus is the light of the world. Yet, often, these traditions themselves begin to overshadow the reason behind why we do them.

So this year, let's refocus and spend some quiet time reflecting on the gift of Jesus' incarnation. God Himself became human because He wanted an intimate relationship with you. He's shown this desire throughout the Bible, walking in the garden with Adam and Eve, then when our parents sinned and caused separation of ourselves from Him. However, He didn't just leave us. He became the perfect sacrifice for us because He loves us. He became one of us, faced every temptation we face and maintained His perfection. Then He gave up His life for us, to reinstate that intimate relationship with our heavenly Father that was lost, allowing us to spend eternity with Him. That seems like a pretty incredible gift to me.

So I encourage you to take some time this year to ponder the deep love we see in the Christmas story. Read the gospels, learn more about how much your Heavenly Father loves you. Slow down, enjoy the traditions but remember the meaning behind them, all while looking forward to the day when we will receive the gift of eternal life that Christ won for us. Merry Christmas!

By: Rebecca Heinze

Christmas Concert

Christmas time is coming, and with Christmas, the annual Immanuel Lutheran winter concert! The winter concert will be taking place on Tuesday, December 17, at 7pm. The concert will take place in the sanctuary.

At the concert, there will be many different groups showing their talents. The first will be the grade school bands. Although many of them are new to their instruments, they still put in a lot of hard work and time working on their pieces. I've always been impressed with how wonderful they sound come concert time.

Another group that will be performing is the grade school handbell choirs. Handbells are a fun way to make music with a large group. The handbells allow students of every musical ability to work together to play songs.

The songs and techniques that they use are always very impressive.

The high school choir will also be singing at the winter concert. The high school choir works hard all fall semester to be able to sing impressive arrangements. Mrs. Grace Schreyer is the new choir director this year, and we are excited to see what they have put together.

Lastly, the 7-12 grade bands will be playing. Although a small group, they play songs that showcase all of their talents and that work for a small group.

The Immanuel winter concert is a great way to see the talents and hard work of Immanuel students of all ages. We hope to see you there!

By: Rebekah Busch

Basketball Begins

Basketball season at ILHS is officially underway! Some major changes have been made to the sports at Immanuel, including a new league that includes 18 teams from Christian schools across the state of Minnesota. This league is much larger than our last, and the competition should be good.

Another change in the boys' team is the new head coach, Eric Libby. He will coach the boys' JV and Varsity teams alongside assistant coach Sarah Kruse and returning part-time coach Mark Matzke.

The boys and girls are officially two weeks in. The boys' first game was on Tuesday, December 3, and after a hard-fought game, it ended in a close loss to Hope Christian Academy, with a final score of 44-48.

The boys have two more games this week: Facing Valley on Friday, December 6th, and St. Cloud on Saturday. The girls will also play St. Cloud in their first game on Saturday, December 7th.

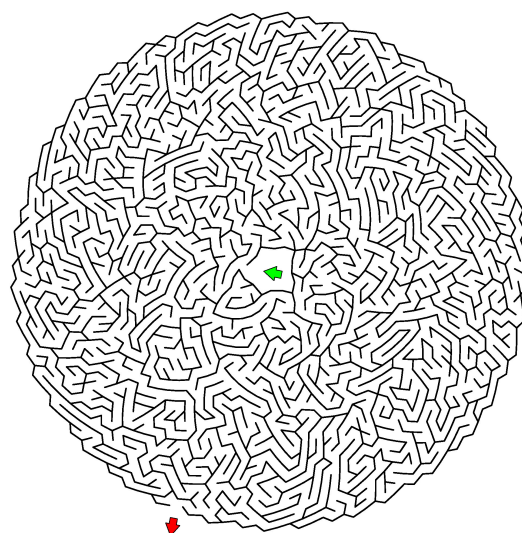
Keep your eye on the school athletic calendar so you can stay up to date with all of the games for our Immanuel Lutheran Trojans and come support our school during one of the upcoming competitions.

Go Trojans!

By: Rebecca Heinze

Tough Mazes by KrazyDad, Book 1

Maze #1



Drama Recap

This past November the highschool drama club practiced hard for their performances of “You Can’t Be Too Careful” which were held Nov. 22-24 and directed by Mrs. Holly Pringle and Mrs. Hilary Lien. Mrs. Pringle has an impressive amount of theatre experience and graduated with a major in Theater from Bethany Lutheran College. She was a fantastic choice of director and set designer. So many comments were made by those who saw the show about how impressive her set and set pieces were.

The plot of the show was about a few old ladies who are meeting up for their regular hang out to play cards, but they unexpectedly get a visit from two robbers posing as photographers and writers for a magazine. The ladies soon realize who they are and what they want as the ladies are held hostage. They try to find a way out of the situation, which proves to not be that hard because the robbers are not very experienced or intelligent crooks.

The show was a hit, the actors were energetic and well rehearsed! Lots of laughs were heard each show. I was able to ask Mrs. Pringle a few questions about the experience and this is what she had to say:

What drew you to this play? *'I had spent a few days browsing the play script sites looking for something that would fit the parameters I had made for this season. I wanted a play with a cast of no more than 10 people, with the majority of the roles being women, seeing as men are usually and unfortunately less interested in being in theatre. I was also looking for a shorter play, one that would only run for 1-1.5 hours or so. Of course it needed to be a play without vulgar content or themes that opposed the values we teach and uphold at Immanuel. After the websites led me to nothing promising, my assistant director, Hilary Lien, let me know there were two boxes full of old scripts in the church attic. I decided to sift through those and lo and behold, I stumbled across a little unknown play entitled, You Can't Be Too Careful. It was a short, small cast required, light, funny play that seemed like a perfectly good option to put on the Immanuel stage for our fall drama season!'*

What would you say were the biggest challenges you face in producing this show? *'The two biggest challenges I ran into while directing this play were: 1. Getting all of my actors in rehearsal on the same day. Basically, I would say all but five or so rehearsals we had at least one actor, if not more, out sick or out of town. It makes it terribly difficult to direct people and rehearse blocking (where, when, and how the actors move onstage) when three out of my six actors for a scene are gone that day. This was something that definitely slowed the process down as we had to constantly backtrack and fill people in on what they missed; meaning that we couldn't always move onto new material.*

2. The length of our rehearsals weren't long enough to cover the material we needed to in a day. This was my fault as I underestimated the time it would take us each day to get through our script. If I were to do it over again, I would make each regular rehearsal three hours long. I know that probably seems crazy to people that haven't been involved in theatre, but it takes a lot longer than people may think to produce a play.

What was your favorite part of the directing process? *'My favorite part of the whole process was sitting back and watching my actors take it away and make it their own. I give them all the directions, instruction, and advice I can during our three weeks of rehearsal, but once those are up, it's no longer my play. It truly becomes their play as soon as the audience fills those seats and the lights come up on Friday night. I step down, say a prayer for them, and watch. I am extremely proud of the actors I had, and I am so grateful that they took a chance on being in drama this fall.'*

A new position was added to the drama club this season. Rebecca Heinze, a junior at ILHS, took on the role of Stage Manager this year. This came with a lot of responsibilities including note-taking for the actors and directors, giving and sending reminders, completing random set prep tasks, managing and organizing props, and helping with tech among other things.

This was the first time an ILHS play has had a stage manager, so I reached out to Rebecca to ask how that went for her. She said, *'It went well, I would say. It's not something I have done before so it was fun to try something new. I think having a stage manager helped things go smoother for drama than it has in the past, because people didn't have to worry about where things were, it was all safe and taken care of. I did really miss being on stage, but that's because I enjoy acting.'*

The cast is, of course, a big part of any production. I took some time to talk to an actress who made her debut on stage this year. Maddie Libby was a great addition to the cast, and had a lot of people commenting about her natural presence on stage. I asked her what inspired her to try out this year, *'Honestly, it was because Mila [friend and classmate] told me to.'* I asked her what her favorite part of being in drama club was, *'It was probably the fact I was trying something new and was able to express myself in a different way.'* Finally, I asked her if she would encourage any one on the fence for auditions next year to do it, *'I would, because I personally was really scared to do it but it ended up being really fun.'*

As always, the drama club put on another spectacular performance for us. Great job, and we can't wait to see what you guys do next year!

By: Leah Dick

