

January 1, 2014

# IMMANUEL MONTHLY



## From Pastor's Desk A New Year

By Rev. Jason M. Braaten

It's a new year. And with a new year comes the time where we take stock of the previous year and change what needs to be changed, improved or done away with altogether. Let's consider then our stewardship of the things that God, out of His divine goodness and mercy, has given to us.

St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor 9:6-15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord of all will both supply and increase what you need to give to the church for its work in and for the world. He tells us that this work that God is doing in us will enrich and bless us in every way and through this it will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving of years past, which will help you to change what needs to be changed, improved or forgotten with altogether.

First, attend the Divine Service to receive God's gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. If you've not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of God's Word, to receive forgiveness, and feast of the rich food of our Lord's body and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to receive the gifts God freely gives.

God doesn't want your money. He wants you—all of you (Matt 22:20–22).

Second, pray for the Lord's help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the Church is and what the Church does. The Church is a mercy place. It inhales the mercy the Father by the death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It exhales this mercy in love toward the neighbor. You are a member of the Church, of God's family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God's mercy, but a bearer of that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy in showing mercy through the generous giving of your income to support the work of the Church in and for the world, as the Israelites did in the Old Testament (Lev 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament's teaching on supporting the work of the Church. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it out of your paycheck first, or does God get what's left over? Are you giving voluntarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and generously? The Old Testament required a tithe, ten percent. The New Testament gives freedom to be generous, to give more for the Church's work. Are you relying on God's promise to provide and increase what you need to do His work? If your answer is no to any of these, repent. If God gave you His only Son, will He not provide for you all things, even physical things? Trust Him, His Word, and heed it.

Fifth, commit for the year a generous proportion of your income, God's gift to you for this body and life. The Old Testament demanded a tithe, ten percent. You are children of the New Covenant. You are free to give more because you have been given more. There is no limit.

# From the President Works of God

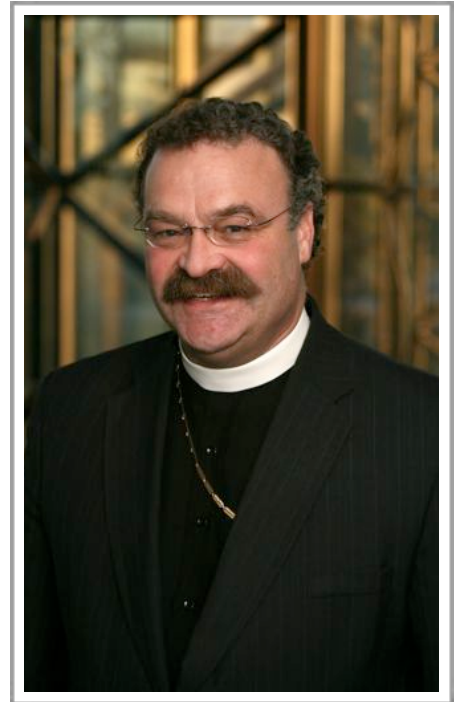
By Rev. Matthew C. Harrison

I'll never forget my first visit to Bethesda Lutheran Communities in Watertown, Wis. As we walked along, we had the opportunity to greet and observe a number of individuals with profound disabilities. One man, I recall, used an electronic device with a keyboard to communicate with us. He was busy about his job stripping copper wire from an unusable electrical motor. He had his vocation. Slowly and methodically, he produced a large pile of copper to be recycled. I was fascinated to learn that many such individuals actually bid for various jobs and enjoyed compensation for their work. While Bethesda housed provided group care for a number of people with disabilities, its goal was and is to have those with disabilities do for themselves and to become active, integral members of the body of Christ--the Church on earth.

As biblical Christians, we treasure all life--in whatever way God chooses to provide it. There is a continuity in our views regarding drugs that kill life in the womb; government programs that force us to pay for such drugs; the value of children, no matter their context or genetic makeup; and the value of every life from conception to grave and in a resurrected eternity. There is simply no other option for those who believe what Jesus told Nicodemus, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

Today, the wonderful thing about work with those with disabilities is that these people are more and more respected for their particular gifts and are encouraged to find and flourish in their particular vocations as they serve in and among us as the Church. While those who are

hearing impaired or unable to see face specific challenges in life, these individuals--often knowing no other state of existence--don't view their disability as a disability at all. In fact, their challenge in life has helped to give them, and all of us, a unique perspective on living life that is rich in our Lord's grace.



Some years ago, while traveling in the Baltics, I first became aware of the worldwide challenges many who have disabilities face. At that time in Latvia, as in the former Soviet Union and in virtually the whole developing world, those with disabilities (mental or physical) were most often shunted out of sight. People with disabilities bore the burden that a larger society imposed upon them because very often society associated disability with divine retribution. When seeing a man blind from birth, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Who sinned? This man or his parents?" Jesus responded, "Neither this one sinner nor his parents, [This happened] that the works of God might be manifest in him" (John 9:1ff). In our congregations today, there are still a myriad of opportunities for us to behold the "works of God" made manifest among us in and with people who have disabilities.

There are great ministries of mercy and outreach happening right now by individuals who themselves are challenged. Unfortunately, disabled populations are hugely unchurched. Opportunities abound for a

vibrant ministry of mercy and life together with families and parents who care for profoundly impaired children. I'm delighted this issue of The Lutheran Witness is highlighting these opportunities.

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**The Book of the Month**  
**5 Things You Can Do**  
**to Read the Bible**  
**Prayerfully**

How much do I need to read the Bible? How often do I need to worship? When our life in Jesus Christ becomes a checklist to be okay or right with the Lord, we are no longer living by faith in Christ. Having been saved and changed by His grace, we read the Bible differently. No longer do we read merely for a checklist of what we ought to do. Now we read the Bible for the saving list of what the Lord has done and what He continues to do, what He gives and what He works

now to bring us under His Gospel.

This volume will equip you to:

- Turn off the noise
- Read the Bible using Luther's simple way
- Read for the particulars
- Find God's pattern of Law and Gospel
- Read the Scriptures through the lens of the Lord's Prayer

# Facts and Figures; Dates and Times

## Greeters List

5 Jan Laverl Byers (West)  
Ruth Sims (East)  
12 Jan Tim & Teri Pollock (West)  
Donna Campbell (East)  
19 Jan Harold & Irene Wattjes (West)  
Jim Dyer (East)  
26 Jan Joan Vukelich (West)  
Laverl Byers (East)  
2 Feb Ruth Sims (West)  
Tim & Teri Pollock (East)  
9 Feb Donna Campbell (West)  
Harold & Irene Wattjes (East)  
16 Feb Jim Dyer (West)  
Joan Vukelich (East)  
23 Feb Laverl Byers (West)  
Ruth Sims (East)

## Coffee Committee

Jan Harold & Irene Wattjes  
Feb Pastor & Lauren Braaten

## Funeral Committee

Jan Sue Danielson  
Feb Joan Vukelich

## Altar Committee

5 Jan Carol Munson  
12 Jan Carol Munson

19 Jan Carol Munson  
26 Jan Judy Legg  
2 Feb Judy Legg  
9 Feb Judy Legg  
16 Feb Lauren Braaten  
23 Feb Lauren Braaten

## Elder On Duty – Communion

5 Jan Steve Hilgendorf  
12 Jan Steve Hilgendorf  
19 Jan Steve Hilgendorf  
26 Jan Josh Whitson  
2 Feb Josh Whitson  
9 Feb Mark Whitson  
16 Feb Mark Whitson  
23 Feb Ronald W. Legg

## Altar Flowers

5 Jan OPEN  
12 Jan OPEN  
19 Jan OPEN  
26 Jan Janice and Wayne Arthur  
2 Feb Ron and Judy Legg  
9 Feb OPEN  
16 Feb OPEN  
23 Feb OPEN

ATTENDANCE				OFFERINGS		
Date	Saturday	Sunday	Special	General	Missions	Building
12/1	15	79	37	\$2,813.00	\$172.75	\$0.00
12/8	29	80	28	\$2,611.27	\$0.00	\$0.00
12/15	14	72	23	\$1,868.25	\$0.00	\$20.00
12/22	18	69	0	\$1,849.11	\$0.00	\$200.00
Christmas Eve & Day	123	45	0	\$2,766.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
12/29	17	75	33	\$2,670.00	\$100.00	\$0.00
Subtotal	216	420	121	\$14,577.63	\$272.75	\$220.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>757</b>			<b>\$14,577.63</b>	<b>\$272.75</b>	<b>\$220.00</b>

January 2014 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion                      10:30 AM Sunday School                      2:30 PM Nursing Home                      11:30 AM Pastor/Pewet                      Catechism Big Team Meeting                      Jack Appert                      Jonathan Braaten                      Joseph Stuber                      Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      8:00 PM Elders Meeting                      7:30 PM Men's Club                      Justin Stuber                      Mike &amp; Toraz Terlin</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      Andrew Crawford                      Tim &amp; Alyssa Bell</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>New Year's Eve                      Church Offices Closed</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Jacob Dyer                      Eric Brewer                      Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion                      Miranda Faulke</p>
<p><b>12</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service/Communion                      10:30 AM Sunday School                      11:30 AM Catechism Class                      11:15 AM Church Council                      Children's Semester Day</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      8:00 PM Missions &amp; Evangelism Meeting</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      11:00 AM Circuit Pastors' Meeting                      Amanda Boretz</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      Aileen &amp; Mark Probst</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      Leona Hall                      Norma Libo</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion                      Emily Rubin</p>
<p><b>19</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion                      10:30 AM Sunday School                      11:30 AM Catechism Class                      Laura Van Ocken                      Mack Terlin                      Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      8:00 PM Board of Education Meeting                      7:30 PM Women                      Christopher Landry</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      11:30 AM T.A.M.A. Meeting</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      Janet Schaefer                      Lucas Stuber</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>Brian Casanova                      Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion</p>
<p><b>26</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion                      10:30 AM Sunday School                      11:30 AM Catechism Class                      7:00 PM Youth Group</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting                      Erin Crawford</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      Alex Wood</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins                      8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	

February 2014 Church Calendar

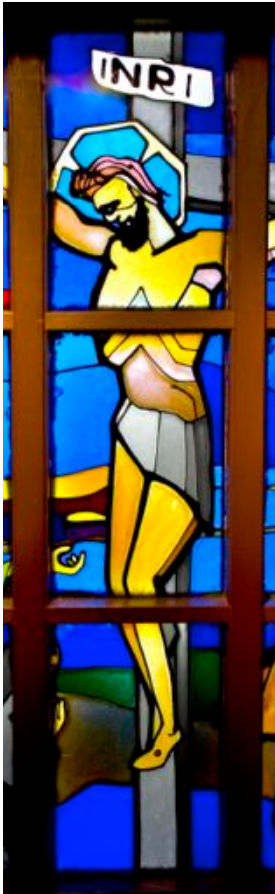
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>8:30 AM Drive Service/Communion Danna Campbell</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Elders Meeting</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Caitlin Munson Don Comenichus Mollie Krasnik</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Glenda Rahn Barb Rahn</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Patron's Day Off</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Danna Campbell</p>
<p><b>9</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class Mull Pringhaus</p> <p>Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Missions &amp; Evangelism Meeting</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:00 AM Circuit Pastors' Meeting</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Diarral Foss Zachary Davidson</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Doris Gardner 8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Richard Sommer Tom Pollock</p>
<p><b>16</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class</p> <p>Children's Semester Day</p> <p>Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Board of Education Meeting Craig &amp; Carol Munson Melanie Rahn</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Alberta Dobbis</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins Laural &amp; Dolores Byers Mary Jane Jones</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Hayden Ely Mark Admell</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Jerome &amp; Alice Johnson</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion</p>
<p><b>23</b></p> <p>8:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class</p> <p>7:00 PM Youth Group Candy Clayford</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Alexis Sluiter Tim DeWitt</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 7:00 PM L.W.B.L. Sandra Rich Ronda Ponder</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 11:30 AM T.A.M.A. Meeting Gregory Nau</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Sawyer Vogel</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>Bryce Roofbeck Byron-Joergens LeighAnn Whitson</p>	<p>Patron's Day Off</p>

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Immanuel's stained glass window in the Narthex.

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