

IMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWS

December 2009

418 W. 4TH STREET, SEDALIA, MO. 65301 Church Office: 660-826-3553 Parsonage: 660-827-2416

E-mail: iuccsedalia@charterinternet.com

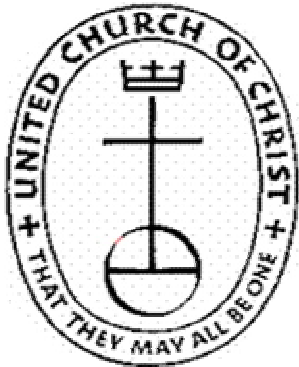
Website: www.iuccsedalia.com

Reverend Brady E. Abel, Pastor

Minerva Taylor, Office Manager & Editor

John Kritos, Organist

Larry Whipple, Sexton



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FROM YOUR PASTOR

Cold weather has come out of no-where (actually, it is from Canada, but you know what I mean) and plopped right down in the middle of our lives. Colorful lights flash on most houses and many buildings, holiday songs float from the radio, Christmas candy covers kitchen counters, and some places around the country are living in a winter wonderland. We could say it is beginning to look, sound, and feel a lot like Christmas.

Or is it? The lights at the top of my Christmas tree have burned out (it's one of those trees with the lights secured to the tree). News reports about more troops going to Afghanistan and suicide bomber attacks continue to lead stories. A record number of people are without work. There's far more focus on retail sales between Thanksgiving and Christmas than any sort of good news. Are we really in the spirit of Christmas?

Perhaps the better question is what is the spirit of Christmas? At a time of the year when the emphasis is on being happy and jolly, there are plenty of reasons that we might not be feeling festive. How can we reconcile the reality of our every-days with a societal message that shouts out, "Come on be happy!"? Where do we find the true spirit of the season?

The answer, of course, is God. The joy that comes from God; the joy offered to us at Christmas and all year, is not a joy that represents earthly happiness, but is a joy that reminds us that God loves us and cares about us no matter what we are experiencing in our individual lives. God's joy arrives in ways we don't expect, just like a little baby born in a stable centuries ago, but it will be exactly what we need, just like a little baby born in a stable centuries ago. God's joy is the heart of Christmas.

This season live the spirit of God's joy. It is a real gift. And it is ours for the asking.

Joyfully, Pastor Brady

Pastor's Report – Immanuel United Church of Christ - Council Meeting – Monday Dec 7, 2009

Worship – Christmas Eve worship services will be Thursday December 24 at 7 and 11 p.m. with communion served at both services. Plan to attend one or both services. Service of Holy Communion for December is this Sunday the 13. Children's Christmas program was Sunday December 6 during worship. Graveside service for Helen Deuschle was Monday November 30.

Pastoral Care – Calls continue with communion served to homebound members this month.

Community Activity – Holiday food packs have been gathered and will be distributed Monday December 14 at Open Door. Thanks to the Immanuel congregation for this outpouring of generosity (109 have been collected so far). The Santa Christmas campaign continues and we will deliver gifts and food to "our families" the week of December 20. All tags are off the tree!

Committee Meetings – Christian Education, Executive, and Food 4 Kids Committees have all met since the last council meeting. New committee assignments have been made and will be announced to the congregation starting in January.

Congregational Activity Review – Immanuel UCC hosted the Church Women United meeting on December 6. Hanging of the Greens and potluck lunch were after worship on November 22 with a large number of people participating. Lock in was held for youth on November 20 and 21. Craft night for youth will be December 11. Christmas caroling for homebound members is December 12 at 1 p.m.

Congregational Goals for 2010 – Prayerfully continue to discern where God is calling us to be as a faith community and go to that place with focus and flexibility. Worship attendance goal is to fill the place (155)! **One of the few places where filling it up is free!**

UCC Update – The Missouri Mid South United Church of Christ Biennial Meeting was held the last weekend of October / first weekend of November. The Habakkuk Task Force recommendations were approved and have already started to be implemented. The annual budget for the conference for 2010 was also approved. The next meeting for the conference, which is Faithworks and an annual meeting will be June 11-13 at Drury College in Springfield.

Personal – Thanks to Reverend Duane Levin for leading worship and Reverend Yvonne Marshall for pastoral care calls while I was gone. Big thanks to all who volunteer at IUCC.

COUNCIL MINUTES (unapproved)

Council President Leora Bremer called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Those in attendance were Leora Bremer, Wayne Baslee, Gary Case, Letitia Gerlt, Phil Gerlt, Tim Harster, Carol Knight, John Kritos, David Moore, and Carole Weese. New members in attendance were Julie Bales, Don Barbour, and Cindy Gerlt.

Pastor Brady opened the meeting with a prayer and a reading from Psalm 85:8-13. He also shared the daily devotion from "The Upper Room," regarding Advent and the constant Advent of God into our lives.

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Phil moved to accept the minutes as printed, Gary seconded and the motion carried.

Financial Reports

OCWM – Pastor Brady reported that year-to-date giving to OCWM for 2009 is \$3576.50 vs. \$3931.50 last year. He noted that we are still "running behind" by about \$355.00. The contribution for December 2008 was \$1768, so we have a large contribution to meet this month if we want to match 2008.

Treasurers – Gary Case presented the treasurer's report. He noted that he was glad to report that we are over budget for income at \$100,787.50 versus the budgeted figure of \$100,132.00. The index for income is currently 100.66%. Expenses are at 93.46% of budget currently and

we are very close to being right on budget. We are currently showing a profit of \$2943.34 versus the budgeted deficit of \$9673.00. This figure includes the undistributed German Dinner income. Without the German Dinner monies we are at a deficit of \$3169.00 dollars. The balance sheet shows the total assets of the church at \$248,362.94.

Benevolence – Gary Case reported that \$442.00 was paid to the Missouri Mid-South Conference for OCWM. The account shows a balance of \$1062.97 including the monies for the \$750.00 scholarship, \$219.00 for engineers without borders, and \$52.07 for the St. Jude Sunday School project, and the usual carry-over of \$41.90. Julie noted that the Sunday school money might not go to St. Jude but a different charity instead.

Memorial – Carol Knight reported for the Memorial Fund. The fund had \$660.00 in receipts for November and Disbursements totaling \$1115.97 for the printer ink, digital camera, and SD card. The final balance was \$20101.81.

Improvement & Maintenance – Wayne Baslee reported \$474.99 income for the month of November. There were multiple disbursements totaling \$791.30, for a final balance of \$19723.01.

Food-4-Kids - Pastor Brady reported for Food-4-Kids. The account had a beginning balance of \$7100.21. Disbursements in-

cluded payments for ads in the Sedalia Democrat and Sedalia News Journal, the purchase of kitchen floor mats, payment to Earthgrains as a re-imbusement for bread, and a re-imbusement to Taylor Chapel. There was also re-imbusement paid to Immanuel from the state government program that helps fund the Food-4-Kids program. The final account balance was \$2590.53.

John moved to accept the financial reports, Tim seconded and the motion carried.

Pastor's Report – Pastor Brady presented the Pastor's Report. Please see the report for details.

Committee Reports

Fellowship – Leora Bremer reported the need to distribute the funds from the German Dinner. Discussion was held regarding the undistributed German Dinner funds. It had already been determined that the funds will be distributed to Open Door, General Fund and Youth Fund. Gary recommended a distribution to be made and further discussion was held. John moved to distribute the funds as follows: \$3088.68 to general fund, \$1000.00 to youth fund, \$500.00 to food packs (also an Open Door program), and \$500.00 to open door. Tim seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Improvement & Maintenance - Wayne Baslee reported that the sump pump has been installed and is hooked-up temporarily (cont'd on page 4)

with additional electric and plumbing work to be done soon. Tom collected figures on the cabinets and they plan to replace top and bottom cabinets on the east wall of the kitchen at an approximate cost of \$1000 excluding hardware and counter tops. The wall has also been sealed. Wayne and Don estimate that the total cost to complete the project will be \$2500. Wayne moved to spend no more than \$2500 dollars to complete the project to be paid from I & M, seconded by Dave Moore and the motion carried. Bids are being collected for work to be done on the parsonage. Bids were taken for the trimming of the tree on the southeast side of the church. The bids were \$485.00 and \$500.00 for the tree to be trimmed back to just behind where it was trimmed the last time. Discussion was held regarding the scope of work and bids. John moved to accept the \$485.00 bid to be paid from Improvement and Maintenance, Gary seconded and the motion carried. The lounge renovation project is underway with painting complete and new carpet and furniture coming in the near future. Don has gotten one bid from Turner in Sedalia for gutter replacement for the church. He has also contacted another company in Kansas City, KS and he has been referred and will be getting a bid from them. Don will bring two bids to the January Council Meeting and then to the congregational meeting if time allows. New stairway lighting in the hallway adjacent to the main level of the service building has been completed and is a very nice addition.

Evangelism – Carol Knight reported that the “Hanging of the Greens” and potluck dinner were held November 22.

Outreach – No Report

Worship & Music– John reported that the committee met in November discuss the Christmas Services. Mary Margaret Dale will perform for services on December 20. Christmas Eve services will be at 7:00 pm and 11:00 pm. The choir will present a program at the early service and John will present the special music at the late service. Quiet music will be introduced on a trial basis during the passing of the peace beginning in January.

Stewardship – No report

Christian Education – Carole Weese reported that they will have craft night Friday night, December 11, and caroling on Saturday, December 12. A bowling event has been planned for January.

Health & Wellness – No Report

Technology – Tim had no report from the committee. Dee and Leora have volunteered to help with archive subcommittee, which will fall under the responsibilities of the Technology Committee this year.

Pastoral Relations - No report

Food 4 Kids – There was no report from Food-4-Kids. Julie noted that the thank you advertisements and weekly advertisements were a very positive effort this year.

Executive Committee – Leora reported that the Council needed to approve committee members

proposed by the Executive Committee. Tim moved to accept the appointments made by the committee, Carol Knight seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business:

Leora Bremer and Pastor Brady attended the Biennial Missouri-Mid South Conference meeting Oct. 30-November 1, 2009. This was an important meeting concerning restructuring of the conference.

New Business:

The Council reviewed the Christmas letter to be sent to the congregation. Distribution of the funds will be: \$300 to be given from the Christmas offering to the United Way and the remainder to OCWM as approved at the October 26th council meeting. John moved to approve the Christmas letter, Carol Knight seconded and the motion carried.

Gary made a motion for the Council to affirm that the congregation recognizes the value of the Pastor's housing at 30% of base salary for the purpose of Social Security tax. John seconded and the motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding the current insurance plan and our insurance needs. Gary presented the information provided by UC-CIB versus our current coverage with Continental Western. Discussion was held. It was decided that the UCCIB representative would come to the January meeting to present information. (cont'd page 5)

Leora and John presented the need for the Council to ratify the vote of acceptance from the Executive Committee of the donation made by Mary McLaughlin for the renovation and re-decorating of the lounge. Letitia moved to ratify the acceptance of the donation, Carol Knight seconded and the motion carried. It was noted that the gift was accepted with deep appreciation for Mary's generosity.

Election of Officers- John nominated Julie Bales for the office of President, Dave moved to accept by acclamation, Tim seconded and the motion carried. Carol Knight nominated Tim Harster to remain in the office of Vice President, nominations ceased, John seconded and the motion carried. Gary nominated John Kritos to remain in the office of Secretary, nominations ceased, Letitia seconded and the motion carried. John Kritos nominated Gary Case to remain as Treasurer, nominations ceased, the motion was seconded by Letitia and the motion carried.

John nominated Carol Knight to remain as the Treasurer of the Memorial Fund, nominations ceased, Carole Weese seconded and the motion carried. For the Treasurer of Improvement & Maintenance, Wayne Baslee was nominated by Gary Case, nominations ceased, John seconded and the motion carried.

Tim moved to spend up to \$150.00 for a computer security suite to be paid out of the General Fund to update the computer security, Gary seconded, and the motion carried.

Discussion was held regarding the old furniture from the Lounge. Jennifer Brown wants the flowered chairs, discussion was held and the council approved giving the chairs to Jennifer. Leora will get Cook's Furniture to look at the desk to see if they will be interested in purchasing it.

Thanks were expressed to Leora for four years of service as President of the Council.

The January Congregational Meeting will be held January 17, 2009.

Pastor Brady led the Council in the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

John Kritos,
Secretary

ANNUAL REPORTS are due in the church office by **January 5, 2010**. They will be accepted at anytime before but need to be here at least by that date to be ready for the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 17th.

I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how gray the day may appear.

ANNUAL GARAGE SALE COMING UP IN MARCH 2010

Immanuel's annual garage sale is **Saturday, March 6, 2010**.

As everyone is getting things out for Christmas and will also be putting things away, if you find items you no longer need or want, please bring them to the church and put in the basement for the garage sale. We're looking for clothing, housewares, books, games, toys, seasonal items and anything else you care to donate.

We're also having a bake sale, so please be thinking of baked goods to make and bring for the sale.

As ingredients for baked goods are on sale this holiday season, now would be a good time to stock up for the baked items.

Don't forget biscuits & gravy will be served in the morning.

So put your thinking caps on for items to bring. When you think about it, March 6th is just around the corner and will be here before you know it.

Kathy Smith

Garage Sale Coordinator

PARRISH NURSE NEWS

How is your mood?

With all the activities of the holidays it is easy to feel overwhelmed. Add the cold, dreary days of winter and your mood and energy decline.

We have heard repeatedly that exercise is good for us. Not only is exercise good for our physical health it also has positive psychological benefits. A regular exercise program can help keep those winter blues at bay. Remember, if you plan to start an exercise program check with your health care provider to see what level of exercise is appropriate for you. The indoor walking track at State Fair Community College is an ideal place to walk; they will be closed for break between semesters. Immanuel will again participate in the Sedalia Fitness program beginning in January. Julie Bales will give us the program plan as soon as it is announced.

Being around other people can actually lift our spirits. Visit friends or join a group that has interests similar to yours. Double the value by joining an exercise group.

Get out and act like you are on top of the world actually can improve your mood.

Random acts of kindness can also lift your mood. Giving to others in need can make you feel good yourself.

Remember that the power of prayer can be fantastic. Prayer can give you the inner peace you are looking for. It doesn't need to be elaborate, just talk to God.

Stroke

Stroke is a brain attack, cutting off vital blood flow and oxygen to the brain. Two million brain cells die every minute during stroke, increasing risk of permanent brain damage, disability or death. Learn the symptoms of stroke, act **FAST** when they occur and **call 9-1-1** to get medical attention that can save a life and limit disabilities.

Use the F.A.S.T. method for recognizing and responding to stroke symptoms:

F = Face Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A = Arms Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S = Speech Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?

T = Time If you observe any of these signs, it's time to call 9-1-1 or get to the nearest stroke center or hospital.

- *Source: National Stroke Association*

Merry Christmas,

Leora Bremer, R. N.
Parish Nurse



Our Christmas Food Bag drive was a GREAT success. We donated 111 bags. They weighed 1,408 pounds. Each bag was handled 3 times during the day. Loading the trucks at the church, unloading at the Pantry. Santa's chief Elf, AKA B. Abel, then carried each Food Bag to the client's car. Unless my math is faulty that makes 4,224 pounds of work. None of us needed to work out Monday evening.

For the month we donated 1,566 pounds. Annual total = 8,124 pounds. We served 118 families (328 individuals) on 12/14. Immanuel worked 32 hours during the Nov—Dec. period (annual total = 350 hours).

Thank you to Don and Gary for bringing trucks to transport the bags to Open Door.

In January the children will be learning about Jesus as they study the gospel of John. They will rejoice knowing we are loved by God and to celebrate his love that just keeps coming and coming and coming!! God is with us. They will hear about the good news from God that Jesus read about. The teachers in January will be Carol Weese and William Gerlt.

Hats off to the rest of our faithful gang: Carol, Joan, and Durward — whatever needs to be done, they do it. And special thanks to each person who furnished a food bag for this project.

As I wrote earlier, the Guth's are not sending local Christmas cards this year. Those \$\$ went to fill food bags. Nevertheless—we wish every member of our Immanuel family a wonderful Christmas. May 2010 treat you gently. God Bless.

Betty Guth

This letter was received a few days after handing out Holiday Food Packs at Open Door:

To Immanuel United Church of Christ,

I was at the Open Door Food Pantry today and received from your church a sack of food and a \$10.00 gift card for meat at Bings. It is just great and I appreciate it very much. It is complete with everything I need for Christmas dinner. You just don't realize how much that will help me. Again thank you all so very much and may everyone have a wonderful Christmas.

May God Bless.

A grateful recipient

SUNDAY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Upcoming Events- Mark your calendars:

January 9- Bowling

February 6 - Movie

February 20 - Annual Chili/Soup challenge and Dessert Auction

March 12 - Lock In

Be sure to plan to attend and bring your favorite chili or soup to the challenge on Febru-

ary 20. The supper will begin at 5:30 and the Dessert Auction will start at 6:30.

Fitness Challenge 2010 will kick off on **January 7th**. We have had 3 teams to represent Immanuel the last 2 years. How many teams can we have this year? Are you going to participate? Watch for the sign-up sheet in the Red room and get movin!!

Julie Bales

THIS AND THAT

Church Women United Ecumenical Action:

Joyce Williams and Betty Carpenter held a party for Pleasant View Estates on October 15. Twelve players enjoyed a game of Bowl and Score. Everyone enjoyed refreshments. There are 23 residents living in the Home.

We want to thank Pastor Brady and our church family for all the beautiful cards for our 60th Wedding Anniversary and George's birthday wishes. May God bless all of you.

George & Marie Hunter

Rev. Brady Abel,

Just wanted to thank you and your congregation for the great hospitality you showed Church Women United when you hosted our combined Human Rights and World

Community Day Celebration .

Sorry a death in my family made it impossible for me to be there.

Again Thanks

JoAnn Lamberth

BIRTHDAYS

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1- Donna Gawedzinski | 8 - Joe Hunter | 24 - William Gerlt |
| 2 - Dennis Edwards
Tyler Wyne | 14 - Joyce Williams | 25 - Michael Reno
Gabe Franke |
| 3 - Wilma Baslee | 19 - Ken Mosby | 28 - Megan Harster |
| 6 - Grace Franke | 20 - Bobby Oehrke | 30 - Mary Bowlin |
| 7 - Jeff Stetzenbach | 21 - Juanita Messerli | |
| | 23 - Dustin Bales | |

ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3 - Dennis & Loretta Edwards | 24 - Don & Carolyn Barbour |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|

EVENTS

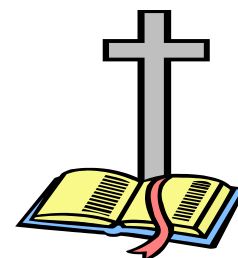
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| 3 - Communion Sunday | 9 - Bowling Party |
| 4 - 7:00 p.m. Council Meeting | 10 - Blood Pressure Sunday |
| 5 - Annual Reports due in church office | 11 - 5:30 p.m. - Christian Ed. Meeting |
| 4:30 p.m. - Health & Wellness Meeting | 17 - Congregational Meeting |

JANUARY 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Lectionary Readings

January 3:	January 17:	January 31:
Jeremiah 31:7-14	Isaiah 62:1-5	Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 147:12-20	Psalm 36:5-10	Psalm 71:1-6
Ephesians 1:3-14	1 Corinthians 12:1-11	1 Corinthians 13:1-13
John 1:1-18	John 2:1-11	Luke 4:21-30
January 10:	January 24:	
Isaiah 43:1-7	Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10	
Psalm 29	Psalm 19	
Acts 8:14-17	1 Corinthians 12:12-31a	
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22	Luke 4:14-21	



SHARING OUR TALENTS FOR JANUARY 2010

USHERS AND COMMUNION

Don and Carolyn Barbour

LITURGISTS

January 3 - Joyce Williams

January 10 - Carol Knight

January 17 - Carole Weese

January 24 - Phil Gerlt

January 31 - Kris Knight

ACOLYTES

January 3 - Paige Staus

January 10 - Madison Knight

January 17 - Kylie Bales

January 24 - Megan & Allie Wilbanks

January 31 - Paige Staus

GREETERS

January 3 - Joyce Williams

January 10 - Kris & Carol Knight family

January 17 - Loretta & Dennis Edwards

January 24 - Phil & Cindy Gerlt family

January 31 - Luann Stovall & Melody

Swearingen

FLOWERS

January 3 - Durward & Betty Guth

January 10 - Sam & Diane Mehan

January 17 - Don & Carolyn Barbour

January 24 - Julie Bales

January 31 - Phil & Cindy Gerlt

FELLOWSHIP

January 3 - Joyce Williams

January 10 - Gary & Carol Case

January 17 - Leora Bremer

January 24 - Kathy Smith

January 31 - Lynda Hartman

Helen Deuschle passed away on November 26, 2009 at Rest Haven Nursing Home in Sedalia, Mo. Graveside services were held on Monday, November 30th. She is survived by a daughter and two sons, and grandchildren.

Raymond Fieth, long time member and former organist of Immanuel, passed away on Wednesday, December 9, 2009. Funeral services officiated by Pastor Brady Abel were held at the Ralph Jones Funeral Home in Odessa on Saturday, December 12, 2009.

B. J. Tegtmeyer's cousin, Bob Yancey, passed away on November 3 from brain cancer.

Leloy Bottcher spent several days in Bothwell Hospital. She has now been dismissed to Four Seasons Living Center temporarily.

Marlin Tegtmeyer's sister, Trudy Baker, has been in the hospital in Jefferson City in intensive care this past week.

Dick Bremer recently underwent treatment for prostate cancer.

Cathy Lewis spent several days in the hospital in Columbia, but is has returned home.

Roger Hill also spent time in Bothwell Regional Health Center and has returned home.

George Hunter is currently back in Bothwell Regional and will probably spend a few days getting over pneumonia and having tests run.



Ah! Dearest Jesus, Holy Child

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

My heart for very job doth leap,
My lips no more can silence keep,
I too must sing, with joyful tongue,
That sweetest ancient song,

Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given
While angels sing with pious mirth.
A glad new year to all the earth!

Amen

Martin Luther