

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS



Happy New Year to the Saints at Camillus!

Here are some thoughts for all of us as we start out 2026...

Our culture second-guesses God constantly. Whether on the matter of origins, or morality, or the afterlife, or any of a million other topics, the plain teaching of God's Word is bent, twisted, upended, or tossed aside entirely.

But that's nothing new. Satan himself second-guessed the Lord, thinking a created angel could make a better ruler of the universe than the perfect, infinite God. And then Satan took his insinuations to the very first woman, getting her and her husband to second-guess God as well. We have all suffered for their error.

Though we can't escape our sinful environment, we don't have to make it worse either. As Christians, temples of God's Holy Spirit, we have every opportunity to reject the voice of doubt and rebellion that nags at our hearts and minds. In this New Year we can choose to immerse ourselves in God's Word, in prayer, in the denial of our natural impulses. And as we do, we'll find ourselves better able to resist the next temptation that comes.

Our enemy is cunning. But we are not "ignorant of his schemes" (2 Corinthians 2:11 HCSB). Be ready and be firm. Don't ever allow yourself to second guess God.

Now there's New Year's resolution that will really pay off!

What resolutions are you making for this New Year? I am reminded that after 3-7 days of consistent activity, that activity becomes habit. It's making it through those first 3-7 days that sinks most people's intentions. Daily Scripture reading? Intentional prayer time each day? A daily mission project? A scheduled time to serve others? Can you make a plan to be consistent in this new resolution?

Use this turn of the page on your calendar to reset your walk with Jesus! May your 2026 will be a great year!

Pastor Jack

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THIS AND THAT FROM PASTOR JACK...

Here are some things to think about and maybe even mark your calendars to attend...

1. **LENT BEGIN** with our Ash Wednesday worship service on Wednesday, February 18, 2026. This year's Lenten theme is "Dying His Death... Living His Life". Based on our Advent success we will again offer a Lenten Study group at 12:00noon on Mondays during Lent.
2. **OFFICE HOURS...** the office remain Monday-Friday from about 9:15- 3:00pm with an hour closed for the lunch hour from 12:30-1:30pm. Emergency numbers are available of the answering machine for any pastoral emergencies that may arise.
3. **ARE YOU WEARING** your church name tag each week? It is so nice to hear our own names and be able to call others by their name as well. Thanks for taking the time to put your nae tag on each week.
4. **KIDZ CLUB** continues each Sunday morning. Lorlie has a lot of fun and educational activities planned for the kids and we hope to see all the young people for KIDZ CLUB each week!
5. **WELCOME REV. DR. RUSS HALL** who will be leading worship on Sunday, January 18th. The congregation will be blessed to welcome Truss back to our pulpit while I am away!
6. **CAMILLUS RIDGE AND SUMMERFIELD WORSHIP** will both be held the second Wednesday of the month. Camillus Ridge worship will be held at 11:00am, while Summerfield worship will begin at 1:30pm on that day. You are invited to join us at either worship time to celebrate with the residents.
7. **ON SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15th** we will welcome our District Superintendent, Rev. Dr. Sherri Rood who will be bringing the message and leading worship with me. Make sure you are here for this special day of worship!
8. **THANKS FOR YOU CHRISTMAS GIFT** presented to me and our staff on Christmas Eve. It is a joy to serve God here at Immanuel and we are so thankful for your support and all of our wonderful staff members.

Pastor Jack



Our youth at Immanuel recently made 80 Christmas cards during our Kidz Club time on just two Sunday mornings! We then took the cards with us to Summerfield Village and Brookdale Bellevue along with Pastor Jack and members of the congregation to sing Christmas Carols along with bell ringing for and with the residents and left the wonderful cards we made with the residents of these centers. Then, the following weekend the kids all gathered to be part of the Living Nativity here at Immanuel. It was a beautiful night with the kids acting the parts of angels, shepherds and the three wisemen.

Our youth group for kids in middle/ Jr High school continues to meet once a month. If you know of any kids that would like to join us we would love to have them. Please contact me for further information on any of our Kidz Club or youth activities. Thank You, Lorlie



From the Music Director:

As we begin a new year, I want to offer heartfelt thanks to the many musicians in our church community who so generously shared their gifts during the Advent and Christmas season. Through choir anthems, instrumental offerings, and special music, your time and talent helped lead our worship and deepen the meaning of the season for our church family. You did so with heartfelt contributions of time and sometimes with the complications of busy schedules and chaotic weather happenings.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I invite anyone who may feel called to share a musical gift—whether through singing, playing an instrument, or supporting our music ministry in other ways—to consider getting involved. New voices and hands are always welcome, and there are opportunities for a wide range of skill levels and availability.

We are so blessed at Immanuel by the many ways that music enriches our worship, and for the gifts shared among us as we enter this new year together.

Happy New Year! Colin Keating



DOOR SPRAYS

- Thanks to Dan Martini owner of Syracuse Christmas Tree Farm in Syracuse for donating the greens.
- > Thanks to Mike DeOrdio, Jerry Sabattis, Mike Block and Gary Merckel for cutting the greens.
- > Thanks to Denise Sabattis, Mike DeOrdio & Ed Owens who helped set up the tables in the fellowship hall.
- > Thanks to Denise Sabattis, Ruth Mcconnelee, Ed Owens and Mile DeOrdio who helped assemble the door sprays.
- > Thanks to Julie Deordio, Denise Sabattis, Angie Keida, Melanie & Kaylee Blackledge, Judy Owens, Karen Picconi, Ruth Mcconnelee, Betty Block, Joan Archambeau, Paula Brunelle, Melissa Clay, Tracey Pickering, Lorie Wood, Nori Gartner-Baca, Haley Mikus & Lynne Hessney who did an outstanding job decorating the sprays.
- > Thanks to everyone who purchased a door spray.
- Through this cooperative effort we made 52 door sprays (sold 50, donated 2 to the church) and as everything is donated plus there was \$30.00 in cash donations we were able to contribute \$1,030.00 to the Mission Team for Disaster Recovery.

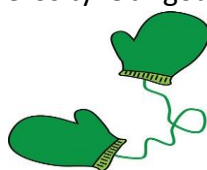


Mitten Tree

On behalf of the Mission Team a heartfelt thank you is extended to everyone who donated to this project. Every branch of our tree was covered with socks, mittens, hats, scarves and gloves. And next to the tree there were also gently used snowpants and coats.

The smaller size children's items will be given to East Hill Elementary School in Camillus. The larger size children's items will be given to the Solvay Geddes Community Youth Center.

The children of our community will be warmer this winter because of your generosity. Our goal was 100 items and this year 120 items were donated!
Shelley Dawson Smith



Heifer International

Thank you to everyone who made a contribution to our collection for Heifer International. Thanks to your big-heartedness, we were able to send a check for \$1,900.00 to support Heifer International's global fight against poverty. We love being members of such a generous congregation, who support our efforts for this worthy organization every year.

Sara and Helen Forward



Shoe Ministry

Immanuel supports the shoe ministry that was started by "Ralph the Shoe Guy" owner of Discount Shoe Repair located in downtown Syracuse. Ralph refurbishes the shoes which may involve some polish or replacing the laces or putting on new soles and he then gives the shoes to the Rescue Mission. In 2010 Ralph gave a pair of boots to a homeless man whose toes were sticking out of his shoes. He said the man never said thank you but Ralph saw it as a sign from the Man up above so in 2011 he started this ministry and only 35 pairs of shoes were donated however it has grown over the years to a record 45,201 pairs of shoes donated in 2025! The Rescue Mission has received 300,030 shoes over the past 15 years from Ralph! Not only does Ralph donate his time and the supplies but he does accept cash to help defray the cost of the supplies.

Immanuel donated approximately 131 pairs of shoes in 2025. My thanks to Jim & Marilyn Vannelli who delivered our shoe donations to Ralph. Let's continue to help Ralph and the Rescue Mission! The donation box is in the Narthex under the coat hangers.

Any questions ask Shelley Dawson Smith 315-727-0671.



M2 Report

October 2025 Donations

Total Donated	\$2,135.00	
Missions	\$711.67	33.33%
Maintenance/Trustees	\$1,423.33	66.66%

November 2025 Donations

Total Donated	\$2,792.00	
Missions	\$930.67	33.33%
Maintenance/Trustees	\$1,861.33	66.66%

Any questions ask Shelley Dawson Smith



OUTSIDE LIVING NATIVITY

On December 13th, the church's parking lot was transported back to the birth of our Savior. There was a stable, angels, shepherds, kings, wonderful music and of course real animals! It was a wonderful and magical evening.

A heartfelt and sincere thank you is extended to the following people who helped tell the Christmas story and made it so special:

- Mary*: Gillian Keating
- Joseph*: Jack Keating
- Angel Gabriel*: Elodie Ahl
- Baby Jesus*: Emma Stott
- Shepherds*: Mason Ahl, Asa Kinsley, Sebastian Kowatch, Teddy Kowatch & Griffin O'Brien.
- Angels*: Avery Ahl, Kaylee Blackledge, Etta Davidheiser, Harper Keating, Adie Kinsley, Aeryn Kondratowicz & Hailey Kondratowicz, Eve Kowatch, Sky Owens, Kayla Short, Brynn Simpson & Paisley Stott.
- Kings*: Oscar Kowatch, Brayden Short & Jacob Simpson.
- Vocalists*: Sonia Davidheiser Adie Kinsley & Juliet Sly
- Narrator*: Pastor Jack
- Rt 80 Stables*: Ollie the donkey, Ben & Jerry mini horses and Oscar & Archie mini goats.
- Tori Stopen*: Roosters Hei Hei, Sir Fluff Alot & Riot

An event like this needs help from a number of behind-the-scenes people and my thanks to each and every one:

- Jeff Gribble**: Bell Tower Ringer
- Sam Paventi, Denise Sabattis & Janet Robinson**: Refreshments
- Mike DeOrdio, Larry Mcconnelee, Mike Block & Jerry Sabattis**: Helped set up the stable & the star.
- Mike Block**: Plowed the parking lot.
- Lorlie Wood**: Silent Night song sheet & candles and help with costumes.
- Pam Blocklin**: Made some new angel costumes.
- Parents**: Helped dress the children.

Thank you to all! Shelley Dawson Smith



Second Sunday Lunch

Every second Sunday, after the 10:00 service, from October to April, our Fellowship Committee provides home a home cooked lunch, with tables decorated with Fellowship members' seasonal decor. We take a free will offering to help cover the cost and appreciate your generosity! We have featured some delicious dishes this year from turkey a la king to roast pork, complete with salad, rolls, fruit, dessert, and beverage. In October, Marilyn, our baker, provided eleven kinds of pie!

In January we will do something different. It will be our annual snowman themed Chili/Chowder/Soup Cook-off, with prizes for the three top winners. Please consider bringing a crockpot of your favorite chili/chowder/or soup, or just come and enjoy tasting and voting for your favorite. Drop off your crockpot before the service so we can keep it warm. We will complete the meal with rolls, beverage, and dessert.

These events are a perfect time to invite a friend to church and then enjoy friendly conversation and a delicious meal. We need to know how many people to prepare for every month, so to reserve your seat, make sure you sign up on the tripod outside the Fireplace Room. Come take the chill off with some warm and delicious offerings on January 11.



Fellowship hosts 2nd Sunday lunch 12.14.25



Door sprays 11.22.25



Christmas Caroling 12.7.25

Immanuel United Methodist Church

P.O. Box 335

Camillus NY 13031

Electronic Service Requested

Our Mission

*"To make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation of the world."*

Your
WORD
is a
LAMP
to my
feet
and a
LIGHT
to my path.



Psalm 119:105

January

February

2026

We wish to be good stewards of both financial and environmental resources. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please email us at churchofthebells@gmail.com and request removal.



Pastor

Pastor Jack Keating

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Worship

Sundays at 8:30 & 10am

*Facebook Live during 10am

Kidz Club

During 10am service

Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9am – 3pm

Handicapped accessible

Please join us!