

# THE IMMANUEL DOVE

Discovering and displaying Christ in here and out there

Immanuel Presbyterian Church (USA) Tucson, AZ Volume 31 Issue 12



Christmas is a joyous time of gathering together with family and friends to celebrate the birth of the newborn king. When we gather we hope that somehow, some way the Christ child will yet again bring tidings of comfort and joy and peace on earth and goodwill for all people. We enjoy glimmers of this, yet if we're honest with ourselves, we also can experience the challenges of keeping the peace between family members, bickering between political parties, fragmentation within denominations,

or concerns about the health of a family member or oneself. Maybe we're separated from a loved one this holiday season—either by geography, a falling out, or their passing. We love giving gifts, but then we stress about the looming credit card bill. We get a knot in our stomach thinking about future plans or adjustments we need to make in our lives. Through the hustle and the bustle, the juggling of responsibilities, and keeping track of calendars, we try to not only keep our sanity, but remain focused on the reason for the season. That's no easy task!

In light of this, I'd like to offer you twelve unusual and unlikely Christmas gifts. See these as repurposed and divine white elephant gifts—redeemed and reframed hardships to grow you this Christmas and New Year's. May God give you the gift of new eyes to perceive your circumstances, your family and friends, your life, and even Christ with greater insight this Advent.

- **#1 The gift of difference.** It's freeing to know that in Christ Jesus, unity is not uniformity. Get curious and seek to understand that uncle at the family gathering, that perspective, that people group that baffles or infuriates you. See it as a growing, learning, and stretching opportunity.
- **#2 The gift of argument.** Healthy couples learn to fight less and argue better. The key is to talk honestly, put the issues on the table and our emotions aside, and share about reality. To do it yourself and to allow the one you love to do the same. A good honest debate opens new doors.
- **#3 The gift of tension.** Sometimes a little tension is good for the system, as long as it doesn't become long-term or entrenched. Acute stress makes us alert, awake, and engaged. It gets us thinking and talking about the elephant in the room. Tension prods and pushes us to venture out into unchartered territory.
- **#4 The gift of ambiguity.** It's stressful when plans or life is up in the air. I like to know what's going on. But seasons of uncertainty challenge me to rely upon God in especially deep and personal ways. I have to wait, be still, trust, and be patient.

  \*\*Continued...\*





- **#5 The gift of separation.** Absence makes the heart grow fonder. When we're apart for a time, we can have a breather. Reflect on the one who is not with us and call to mind what we appreciate and what might be changed for the good in the relationship. There's a saying in family therapy, we have to learn to come apart or we'll come apart.
- **#6 The gift of failure**. When we know that we're enveloped in God's grace and forgiveness, we can see failure as a great teacher in our lives. Rather than worry about our perfection, success, or appearances, failure gives us excellent feedback to make needed modifications moving forward.
- **#7 The gift of limitations.** It stinks to be reminded of reality—that we need to live on a budget, that we can't buy that thing we want so bad, that we can no longer do that thing we used to enjoy because of health changes, that we can't make a loved one change. This gift reminds us to entrust our limitations to God's unlimited care.
- **#8 The gift of trouble.** Sometimes in life God leads us to still waters, other times we find ourselves in troubled waters or just hot water. We don't want trouble, but when we find ourselves in that place, we see our desperate need and dependence upon God for help. It was at the troubled waters of the pool of Siloam that Jesus performed a miracle of healing.
- **#9 The gift of vulnerability.** To brave, you have to be vulnerable. You put your authentic self out there and share and show what you think is important and meaningful to a family member about an uncomfortable issue. When we're appropriately vulnerable, we open ourselves up. There's an opportunity to know the other better, to be closer, to see each other in a new light, to take the relationship to a new and better place.
- **#10 The gift of doubt.** Doubt isn't the enemy or the opposite of faith—it's the other side of the coin. God is big enough for your questions. Pray your doubts, your fears, your anger, your questions. Just keep talking to God, asking, wondering, listening, and trusting through the questions. The opposite of faith isn't doubt, it's actually certainty.
- **#11 The gift of imperfection.** It is freeing to not to always expect a flawless event, a perfect gathering, a spotless house, or that stunning meal. Give it your best shot with the time and resources you have, and enjoy it for what is with those around you—revel in rather than be horrified by what's perfectly imperfect.
- **#12 The gift of exhaustion.** If you find yourself fried, freaked out, or frenetic, see it as God's invitation to take a time out. Listen to that body of yours. Slow down, sleep, pare down your calendar, and get refueled so you can get back in the game. You are a human being—you don't have to (and can't) do *everything*.



Happy Advent and Merry Christmas!

John

#### **Session Vote on 2020 Worship Schedule**

I certainly appreciate our Presbyterian polity and process for making decisions! All of your congregational feedback was greatly appreciated as well. The goal of the proposed worship time changes was to minimize scheduling conflicts and to increase opportunities for church members to connect and learn together. Session then began our research to see if the changes would accomplish this.



We learned from session members' research of worship times around town that no churches in Tucson (that we know of) have a service that starts after 11:00am. There are some early afternoon and evening services, but no 11:15 or 11:30 services. During the process of our research, I was also made aware of a study done on church changes that cause conflict and it turns out changing the worship time is way up the list! That got my attention. In addition, the majority of feedback from the choir and the congregation was to keep the present time of worship at the second service.

Thoughtfully and prayerfully considering all this information, session unanimously voted to keep the present worship times. The only change is that the first service has a cushion time in the sanctuary until 9:45am to finish the service and breakdown of the equipment before we transition to practices for the 11:00am service and begin the CE Hour.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts and perspectives! Let's continue the calling and joy of "one anothering" together, where we seek the give and take, to and fro, and lead and follow in the dance of community we find ourselves in, all to the glory of God!

In Christ, Pastor John, on behalf of the Session





#### Lydia Circle Cookie Exchange Monday, Dec 16

Lydia Circle will host a Christmas holiday cookie exchange during our monthly meeting on Monday, December 16th at 6:30pm Witherspoon Hall.

All women of the Church are invited to join us and encouraged to bring 3-5 dozen of your favorite cookies to sample and exchange.

Your family will enjoy all the different flavors of cookies as you bring them home.



## Alternative Gift Market — Sunday, December 8th on the patio between services and after the 11am service

This is an opportunity to invest in gifts that give twice. The Alternative Gift Market will have offerings from missions close to home, across the border and beyond. This annual event demonstrates Immanuel's commitment to missions. Stop by and be inspired to invest in gifts that reflect our continuing commitment to strengthening communities and empowering individuals.





#### **IMMANUEL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

## 'Twas the LIGHT before Christmas

## Sunday, December 15th at 11:00am Service (meet at 9:45am)

This is a meaningful and fun program designed for everyone in the church, no matter your age! Everyone will check in at the program table and be assigned a station. Family groups will stay together. At your station, you'll participate in a devotion together, make a craft or part of the set, learn a song and your part and be ready in an hour! At the 11:00am worship service, we'll present our play and share the amazing LIGHT of Christmas!

Questions? Contact Kris Goorsky at <a href="mailto:kris@immanuelpc.org">kris@immanuelpc.org</a>

### Sunday, December 15th at 4pm

Join us in spreading Christmas cheer to some of our church members and friends in their homes. After all of our caroling, we'll gather at Mary Kay Bush's home for a light meal. For more information contact Kris at <a href="mailto:kris@immanuelpc.org">kris@immanuelpc.org</a>





# DECEMBER YOUTH



#### Sunday Dec. 1st, 3-6pm

#### **ADVENT FESTIVAL**

Please come help children with crafts, help people find their way around & be generally helpful!
Soup & a picture with Santa!

#### Sunday, Dec. 8th, 5-7pm

#### **CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE TITTLE'S!**

Join us for dinner. Bring a non gender specific gift \$5 or less. We'll play some great games & retell Christmas events together!

### Sunday, Dec. 15th, 4-7pm

#### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

Join us as we spread Christmas cheer to people in their homes. We need some adult drivers to help carpool.

### Sunday, Pgc. 22nd, 5-7pm

#### **CHRISTMAS MOVIES!**

Wear cozy clothes, join us for comfort food, hot cocoa and great movies! Slippers and pillows optional!











#### **Border Anniversary**

The Presbyterian Border Region Outreach (PBRO) held its annual meeting November 7th in Agua Prieta, Mexico. Representatives from three of PBRO's five ministry sites attended the meeting, as well as representatives from Grand Canyon Presbytery (Catherine May) and Presbytery de Cristo (Carol Schurr). Along with the usual discussion of the future of PBRO, attendees

reported on each site's support to the migrants and asylum seekers who are waiting at the border crossings in Juarez/El Paso, Nogales, and Agua Prieta/Douglas. Hundreds of meals are served each week, and asylum seekers are offered medical attention as well as shelter and legal assistance. It was announced that Caly Fernandez has recently been hired as the Director of Puentes de Cristo, another PBRO ministry site in Hidalgo, Texas. PBRO president Catherine May (from University Presbyterian in Tempe) is resigning her position as president in order to spend the next year finishing her PhD dissertation, and Randy Campbell expressed his desire for someone to take over the responsibilities of treasurer.

Following the meeting, a 3-day educational event, *Responding to an Exodus: Gospel Hospitality and Empire*, was attended by 150 mission-minded folks, many of them pastors from Presbyterian churches across the country. About a third of them--including Gale Griffin, Mary Kay Bush, Cheryl Wood, Robin Staples, and Carol Schurr--were from Arizona churches. The 35th anniversary of PBRO and the 17th anniversary of Café Justo were celebrated with dinners on Friday and Saturday nights. Workshops and panel discussions were held on how to worship and live as Christians in today's political environment; legal issues and solutions for asylum seekers; and "doing art" as hope and resistance. Participants painted a section of the border wall as well as an outdoor mural at the Migrant Resource Center. The workshop closed on Sunday with a worship service and the Lord's Supper at the border wall in the morning, and a cross-planting in the afternoon to mark the place a migrant died in the desert.

Blessings, Bob Seel

#### Casa Maria Ministry—Saturday, December 14th at 8:00am

Immanuel is one of many organizations in Tucson who regularly help to feed the hungry through donations of sack lunches to the Casa Maria Free Kitchen located in South Tucson. Want to help make sandwiches? Each lunch should contain two meat and cheese sandwiches (please use only butter/margarine—no mayo,



mustard, lettuce or tomato), a piece of fruit (such as a banana, peach, pear, or orange), and a dessert (2 cookies, 1 brownie, etc.). Please bring your sack lunches to the church between 8:00am and 9:00am. The Casa Maria team leaves promptly at 9:00am.



#### **Tucson CROP Hunger Walk**

This year's walk was held on November 3rd at First Methodist Church. We started our walk to a song, "Jesus is Number One!" **Immanuel raised \$700.00!** A portion of donations will go to the Casa Maria Ministry and to the Community Food Bank will receive a portion in addition to CWS/CROP.

Thank you to **Michael and Florence Dungan** for again taking the lead in this special community event each year.



## The Knowledge You Need to Win With Money

Join us on Sunday evenings for a 9 week course

**Beginning January 19 from 5:30-7:00pm** 

## Just in time to overcome your Christmas debt!

- Lesson 1: Emergency Fund & Budgeting
- •Lesson 2: Pay Off All Debt
- •Lesson 3: Save a Fully Funded Emergency Fund
- •Lesson 4: Invest for the Future and Build Wealth
- Lesson 5: Buyer Beware
- •Lesson 6: The Role of Insurance
- Lesson 7: Retirement Planning
- Lesson 8: Real Estate & Mortgages
- Lesson 9: Living & Giving Like No one Else

Cost for the course is \$99.00 (this includes student books, group meetings and 12 months of Financial Peace Membership which includes an app to help you keep track of your monthly budget! Those who have attended every week will receive a \$25 rebate at the end of the class. No class on February 2nd and March 15th. Final class held on March 29th.

Contact Kris Goorsky to register at <a href="mailto:kris@immanuelpc.org">kris@immanuelpc.org</a>.





Dear Immanuel Family,

Thank you to everyone who made the Annual Immanuel Thanksgiving dinner such a success! Whether you helped with table set-up, made decorations, prepared a favorite dish, helped with clean-up, or simply showed up - we are thankful for every contribution! We couldn't have such a successful event without the many, many hands and hearts that worked together! There were over 100

people at the dinner this year! We were blessed to hear a presentation by the Rev. Georges Bitar from the Middle Eastern Presbyterian Fellowship and collected \$100.00 to support that ministry. We are already making plans for next year - more stuffing and more pie! Thank you again to everyone who helped with this much-loved Immanuel tradition! (*Now where are those left over turkey sandwiches?*)

With gratitude,

Your Hospitality Team — Chuck Wilkie, Kelly Wood and Tama Jarvis



#### **Immanuel Blood Drive**

Saturday, January 18th 730am-12:30pm Towner Hall Visit redcrossblood.org to sign up or contact the church office



**The Christmas Joy Offering** has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the *Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions* to provide critical financial support to church workers and their families, and *to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges* equipping communities of color by providing education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their

communities as well. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Here's how our gifts support our past, present, and future leaders--



- •\$1.2 million of gifts from 2018 are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need.
- •Income supplements from the BOP helped nearly 325 households, assisting retired church workers and surviving spouses with the means to provide for themselves.
- •Housing supplements from the BOP helped more than 262 households remain in their homes, afford assisted living, or long-term care.
- •Shared and Emergency Grants from the BOP helped more than 291 households facing times of great financial need or uncertainty due to unforeseen circumstances.
- •\$1 million of gifts from 2018 are being used to provide education and leadership development skills at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.
- •Many of the students attending Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color are the first in their families to enroll in higher education.
- •The Christmas Joy Offering supports the Menaul School in Albuquerque, New Mexico; the Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, Texas; and Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Our Christmas Joy Offering will be collected on Christmas Eve. Individually, we can do a lot. Together, we can do more! Thank you for your support.

**Liturgical Colors**—Several years ago the Worship Team decided to decorate the sanctuary with the seasonal liturgical colors as a way to enhance the visual appreciation of worship. Royal blue is used for the season of Advent (December 1 - December 24). Blue has been adopted in recent years by the PCUSA as an option for Advent because it represents the hopefulness and royalty that is anticipated in the birth of Jesus. The outside of the church is decorated with burlap wreaths symbolizing the rustic nature of the stable with flowers and ribbons in the royal blue. The decorations will remain up until after Epiphany (Three Kings Day) that will be celebrated on Sunday, January 5th. The color purple is considered to be a more subdued color and is used for the solemnity of the Lenten season. White and gold symbolize days of joy (Christmas and Easter). Red represents the Holy Spirit (Pentecost). Green is used for the remainder of the church year.

**The Nativity Set** in the sanctuary was given to Immanuel about 15 years ago by Phyllis Dean. Phyllis' husband Jerry was a Presbyterian pastor serving a church in western Kansas and Phyllis was operating a day care center. A pre-Christmas gift of a 5 or 6 piece starter ceramic Nativity Set was given to Phyllis by one of the day care mothers, who thought Phyllis would enjoy the experience of painting it. Phyllis enjoyed the project so much that she purchased and completed the painting of the entire set of 17 pieces. Jerry joined in by constructing the crèche. There is a second, smaller Nativity Set made by Phyllis' mother, which Phyllis still has and sets up in her own home during the Christmas season. We are so thankful Phyllis chose Immanuel as the home for her Nativity Set.

## December Happenings

- Agape and Lydia Circle Combined Christmas Luncheon will be Saturday, December 14th at 11:30am at the home of Mary Kay Bush located at 9222 E. Charlotte Place. A lunch will be provided but a \$5 donation will be collected. Any money left from paying for the luncheon will go to Los Companeros in Nogales. Pastor John will be leading us in Lesson #4 of our Horizon Study. Please let Mary Kay know if you plan to attend at <a href="mailto:ausmbush3@gmail.com">ausmbush3@gmail.com</a> or (520) 885-0003.
- **Desert Sages Christmas Luncheon** will be Tuesday, December 10th. We will have games at 10:00am as usual then have the luncheon at noon. This will be our last meeting until after the New Year. Next meeting is January 7th. Please let Mary Kay know if you plan to attend the luncheon at <a href="mailto:ausmbush3@gmail.com">ausmbush3@gmail.com</a> or (520) 885-0003.
- Outings to the Movies— Join us for our monthly movie dates provided there is a good movie to see, usually in the early afternoon at the discount theater, Century Gateway 12 on Kolb south of Speedway. Look for notices in the weekly Community Life announcements. Call Ann Thornes at (520) 298-8401 for any suggested movies you would like to see.
- Men's Breakfast meets Mondays at 8:00am in Witherspoon Hall for fellowship and great food —
  pancakes, sausage and lots of strong hot coffee. The Bible study is led by Pastor John Tittle.
- Crafters Group meets Thursdays at 10:15am in Witherspoon Rooms 12/13. Everyone is welcome! All
  types of crafting are welcome and encouraged! Whether you quilt, crochet, knit or are a master of
  popsicle stick creations, we would love to have you join our crew!
- TOPS Take Off Pounds Sensibly, meets **Tuesdays at 6:00pm** in Towner Hall Room 4.
- AA group meets Wednesdays at 7:00pm and Thursdays at 6:30pm in Towner Hall Room 4.
- December Hospitality For the month of December if your last name begins with A or B Help us provide goodies to share for our coffee fellowship following each worship service. Just choose a Sunday during this month and drop off your snacks in the Witherspoon kitchen prior to either service. Some popular snacks are cookies, fruit, veggies and dip, cheese, crackers, baked breads, sugar-free snacks, gluten-free snacks, Chex mix/popcorn.







Jarod Rappaport - Dec 1 Ed Vander Woude - Dec 2 Katherine Marie Evens - Dec 3 Abigail Green - Dec 3 Susan Samoy - Dec 3 Elizabeth Dungan - Dec 4 Harry Ayer - Dec 5 Denise Downard - Dec 6 Liz Wallendorf - Dec 6 Phyllis Dean - Dec 7 Linda Griffith - Dec 8 Bill Prichard - Dec 9 Carol Boone - Dec 11 Emma Collins - Dec 16 Andrea Joscelyn - Dec 16 Catherine Muckenhirn - Dec 17 Cara Sherwood - Dec 17 Luke Tittle - Dec 17 Gary Grochowski - Dec 19 Cameron Mitchell - Dec 19 Kathy Wingstrom - Dec 20 Austin Puckett - Dec 23 Lauren Olson - Dec 24 Marvin North - Dec 25 Diane Thompson - Dec 26



Online giving is a safe, easy way to support the ministries of Immanuel Presbyterian

Church. Through our SimpleChurch secure giving system, you will be able to give to Immanuel with or without an account. Your account information is guaranteed to be secure and private. Visit immanuelpc.org/giving.

Brett Burton - Dec 28

Dave Kaemerer - Dec 28

Voilet Kloiber - Dec 28

Carol Schurr - Dec 30

Bruce Ellwein - Dec 31

Cody Murphy - Dec 31



Richard & Jean Nelson - Dec 1
Michael & Jean Patterson - Dec 2
Don & Pauline McClure - Dec 5
Robert & Maggie Rappaport - Dec 12
Diane & Michael Ross - Dec 17
Colin Roberts & Erika Aurand - Dec 20
William & Anja Price - Dec 26
David & Donna Lohn - Dec 28
Bill & Marcia Aurand - Dec 29
George & Sue Anderson - Dec 30

If you don't see your birthday or anniversary listed, we most likely do not have it on file. Please contact the church office so we can share in your celebration!

#### Congratulations to our Amanda Leachet!!!

Amanda has received her master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Grand Canyon University. While working on her master's degree, Amanda has also been an elder on Session, on the Hospitality Team, on the Christian Education Team, taught Sunday School, Children's Time Together and Vacation Bible School.



She has been a Girl Scout leader and teaches 4th grade at Sahuarita Intermediate School. Amanda earned a 3.95 GPA in her master's program. Her husband, Christopher Leachet, and her parents, Michael and Joanne Patterson, also congratulate her in this achievement.

January 2020 Dove Deadline— Friday, Dec 20th



# December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30am Worship 9:45am CE 11:00am Worship 3:00pm ADVENT FESTIVAL	8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Boy Scouts	3 10:00am Sages 6:00pm TOPS 7:00pm Deacons	4 6:15pm JS Bell Choir 7:30pm LC Bell Choir 7:30pm AA	5 10:00am Crafters 6:30pm AA 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	6	7
8 ALT GIFT MARKET 8:30am Worship 9:45am CE 11:00am Worship 4:00pm Youth Group	9 8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Boy Scouts	10:00am Sages Christmas Luncheon 6:00pm TOPS 7:00pm Session	9:00am Agape Circle 6:15pm JS Bell Choir 7:30pm LC Bell Choir 7:30pm AA	12 10:00am Crafters 6:30pm AA 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	13	8:00am Casa Maria 11:00am Combined Women's Circle Luncheon
15 CHRISTMAS PLAY 8:30am Worship 9:45am CE 11:00am Worship 4:00pm CAROLING	16 8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Lydia Circle 6:30pm Boy Scouts	17 6:00pm TOPS 7:00pm Worship Team	18 6:15pm JS Bell Choir 7:30pm LC Bell Choir 7:30pm AA	19 10:00am Crafters 6:30pm AA 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal	20	21
22 MUSIC & THE WORD 8:30am Worship 9:45am CE 11:00am Worship 5:00pm Youth Group	8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Boy Scouts	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 7:00pm Service 10:00pm Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 7:30pm AA	26 Office Closed 6:30pm AA	27	28
29 10:00am Worship	30 8:00am Men's Breakfast 6:00pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm Boy Scouts	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE Office closes at noon	JAN 1  NEW YEAR'S DAY  7:30pm AA			



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