

Welcome to ReFresh at Emmanuel

(Restoring Energy, Faith, and Relevance to Every Soul's Heart)

November 29, 2026

Welcome to ReFresh at Emmanuel

Welcome Visitors! We extend a special welcome to our visitors. Thank you for worshiping with us. **We strive to live as a Safe and Healing Spiritual Community for all who come, regardless of socio-economic status, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or spiritual path. All are welcome in this holy space.**

We invite you to worship with us on Sundays at our 8:30 am Emmanuel Traditional Worship Service in the chapel or our ReFresh 10:30 am Service either in person or on ZOOM. The Recorded Service is available on Facebook after the service.

To gather online by computer, tablet, or smartphone, use the following link.
http://us02web.zoom.us/j/82726742888?pwd=WFEwOVBXZGd3OHFzSXQ1WXlVTHppZz09

Don't forget to sign the greeting cards for our Emmanuel Family Members.
The cards are on the table in front of the Celebration Room.

Assisting in Worship Today

Presider: Pastor Franck Langholf
Lector and Candle Lighter: Susan Hurley Whitacre
David Whitacre
Guest Musicians: Josh & Kelli Luebke
Accompanist: Clea Arbogast

Altar Guild: Brenden Noble
Consultant: Bill Houtkamp
Sound: Andrew Ehrhardt
Greeting Cards: Taj Guzzardo

Cardio Drumming, Mondays at 4:00 pm, Call Beth, (815) 742-0548, to join

Spiritual Journey's on Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 am on Zoom

Bible Study on Wednesdays at Noon on zoom.
Dial 312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 893 5688 8344 Passcode: 11999
To join by a land line or cell phone, dial the number above and then enter the meeting ID and passcode when prompted.

Silent meditation practice in the Benson Room: Thursdays from 5:30 – 6:15pm. All are welcome. Enter by parking lot entrance. Questions or text Sara 815-742-0581.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Mailing address: P. O. Box 4362, Rockford, IL 61110
Located at: 920 Third Avenue, Rockford, IL 61104 815-963-4815 Fax: 815-963-4808
emmanuelchurch07@gmail.com elcrockford.org
Pastor Frank Langholf, 309-509-5241 fslangholf@gmail.com

Date: November 29, 2026

Theme: First Sunday in Advent—Paradox: Everything Belongs

Prelude: Clea Arbogast

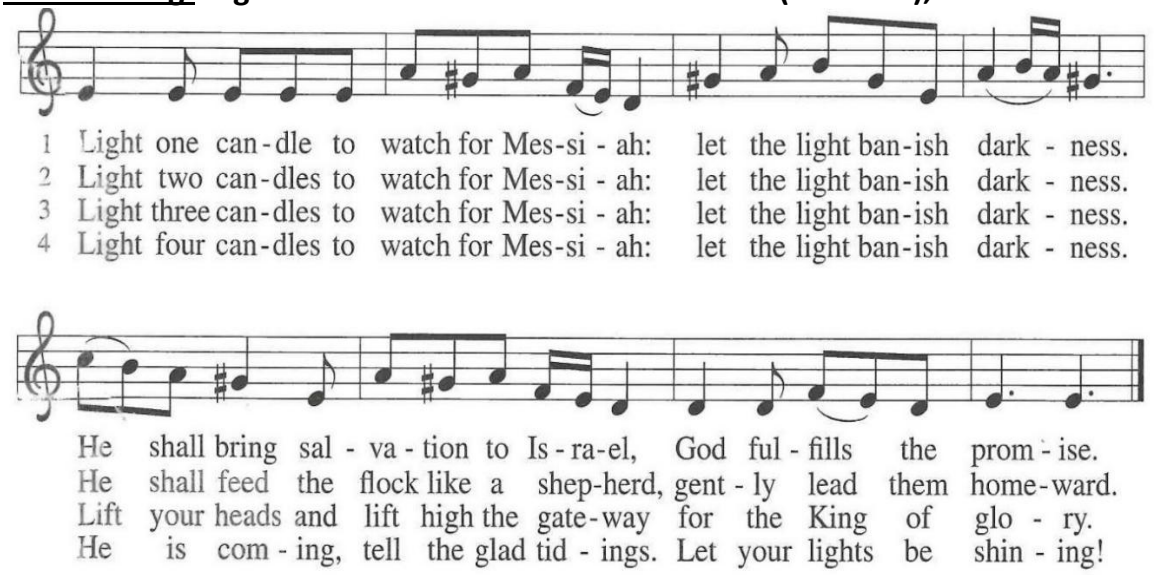
Welcome **Pastor Franck Langholf**

Meditation: "The great and merciful surprise is that we come to God not by doing it right but by doing it wrong!"—Richard Rohr

Our Community Declaration:

Guided by Spirit's Wisdom, Inspired by Creator's Imagination,
Centered in Christ's Love, and knowing that God is our Source,
Emmanuel is a Spiritual Community that is progressive, inclusive, creative, and called to serve.

<u>Advent Song:</u> Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (ELW 240), verse 1



<u>Advent Candle Reading and lighting of candles</u>. (Author Unknown)

If paradox is the reality, doubt is the process and wonder is the inspiration. Then wisdom is what we gain when we integrate them all.

During Advent we are reminded of the paradoxes and incongruities of life:
Light and Darkness
Faith and Fear
Joy and Sorrow
Vulnerability and Power
Weakness and Strength
Done, but not Complete
Already and Not Yet

Gathering Song: O Come, O Come Emmanuel (ELW 257) verse 1

> **O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,**
> **that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**
> **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

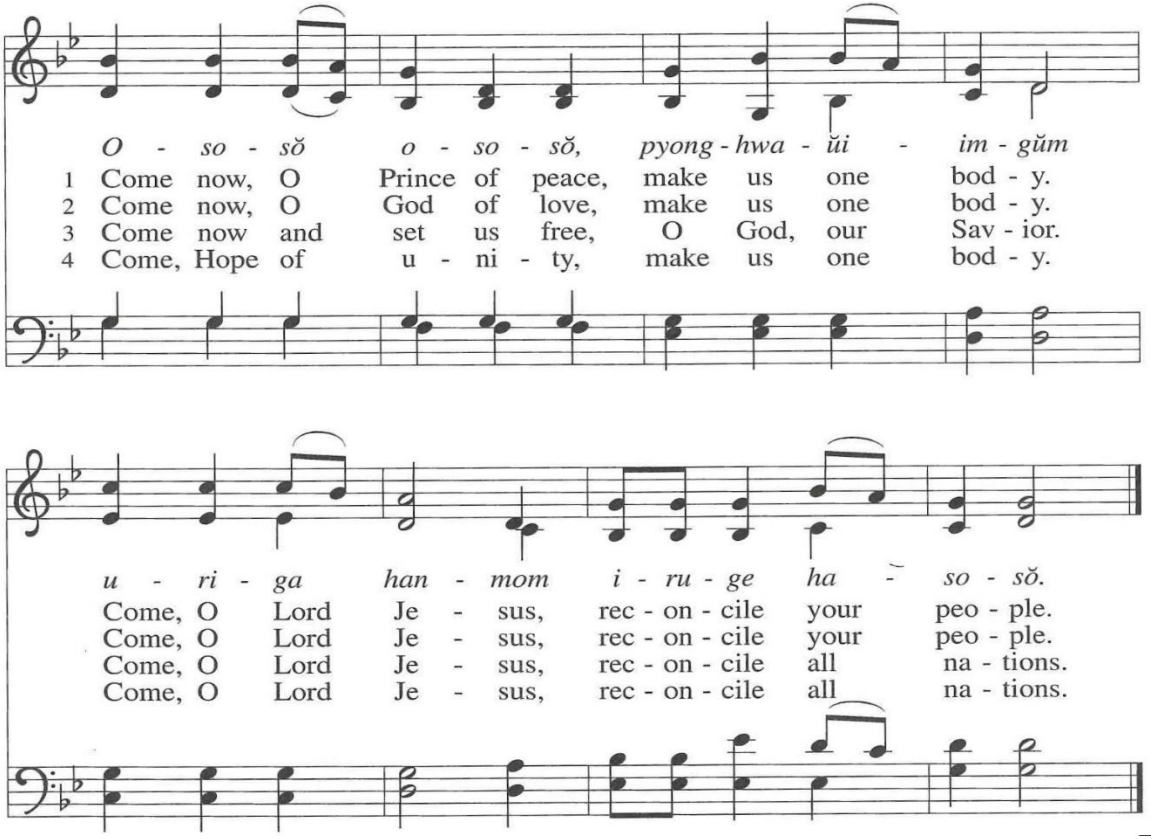
First Reading Fyodor Dostoevsky

"Love all God's creation, both the whole and every grain of sand. Love every leaf, every ray of light. Love the animals, love the plants, love each thing. If you love each thing, you will perceive the mystery of God in all; and when once you perceive this, you will thenceforward grow every day to a fuller understanding of it: until you come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love."

Second Reading- by Richard Rohr from "Everything Belongs"

Historic cultures saw grief as a time of incubation, transformation, and necessary hibernation. Yet this sacred space is the very space we avoid. When we avoid darkness, we avoid tension, spiritual creativity, and finally transformation. We avoid God, who works in the darkness — where we are not in control! Maybe that is the secret: relinquishing control."

Scripture/Meditation Song: Come Now, O Prince of Peace (ELW 247) verse 1



Scripture: Matthew 16: 25-26

For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? Or what will they give in return for their life?

Presider: This is the witness of an early Christian community.

All: May we find wisdom for our living.

Sermon Pastor Frank Langholf

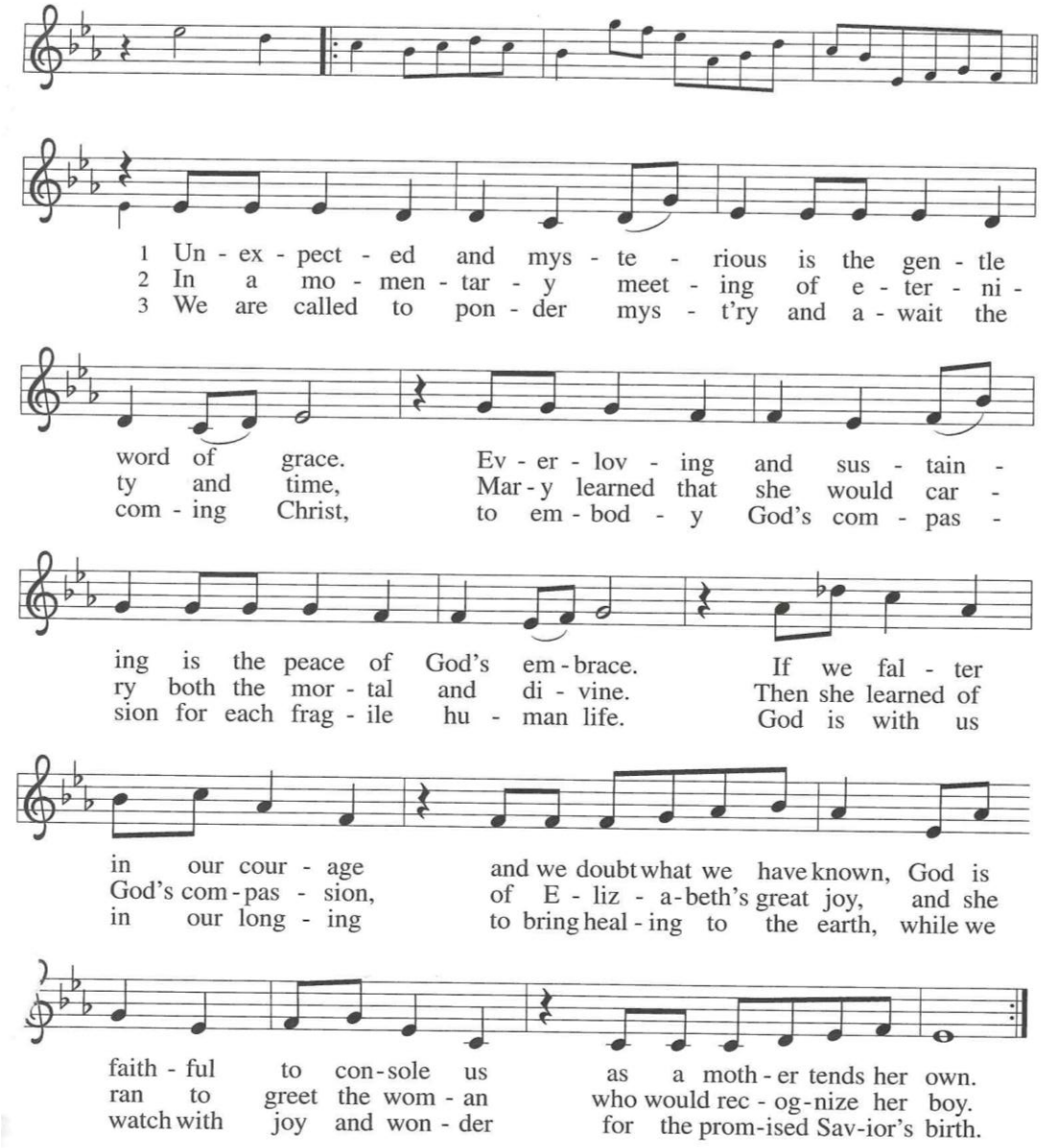
Offering

Presider: We take this time now to offer our gifts and intentions.

Special Music: **Selection by Josh and Kelli Luebke**

Prayers of Healing

Prayer Song and Response: Unexpected and Mysterious (ELW 258) verse 1



Prayers of the People

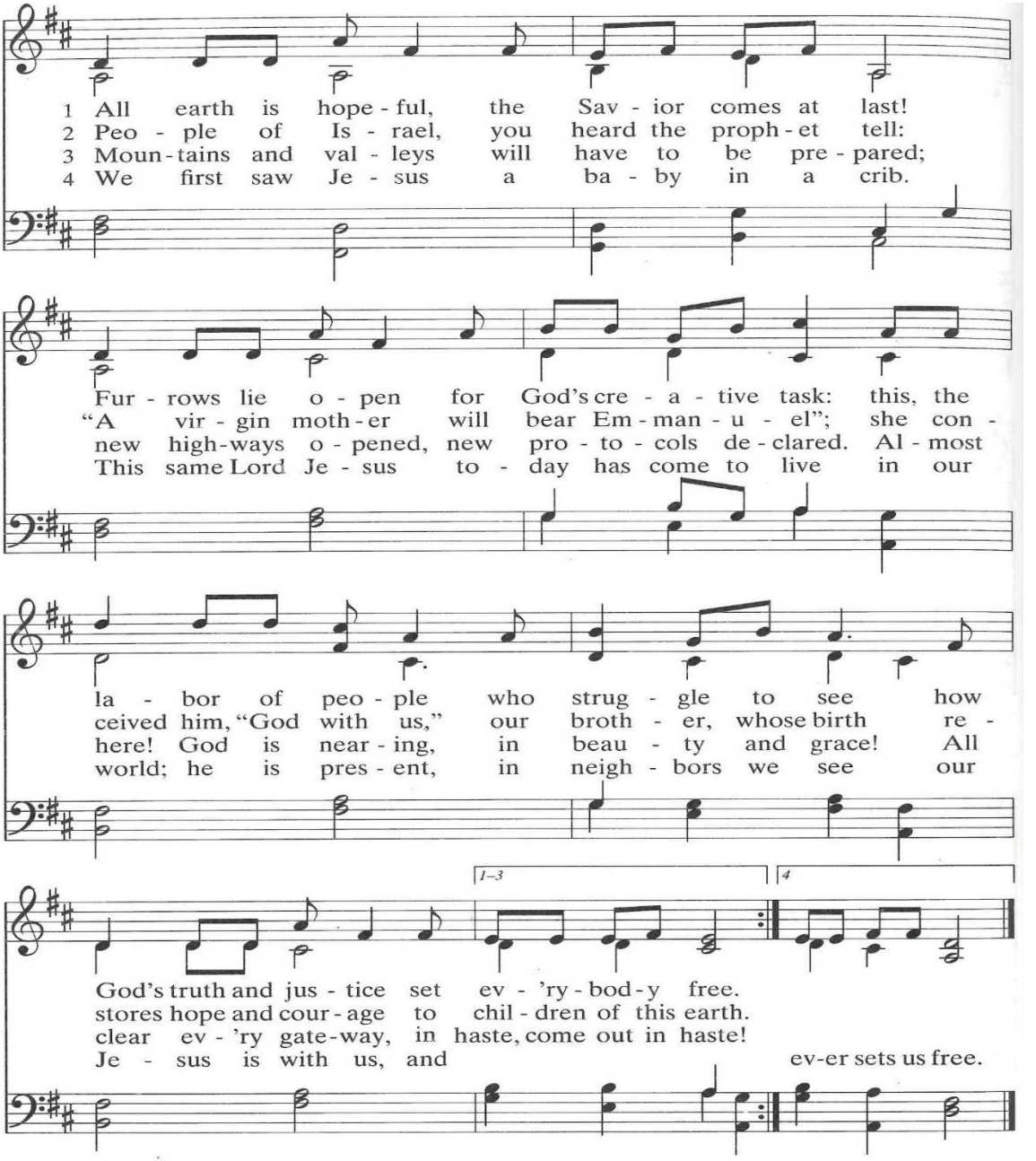
John, Linda, Lorraine, Lenny, Caryl, Deborah, Jerry, Vince, Miguel, Steve, Wanie, Ruth Ann, Andrea, Char, Coulter, Judy, Kristie, Julaine, Jeff, Sally

The Lord's Prayer from Douglas Klotz

O Birther of the Cosmos,
Focus your light within us -- make it useful:
Create your reign of unity now.
Your one desire then acts with ours, as in all light, so in all forms.
Grant us what we need each day in bread and insight.
Loose the cords of mistakes binding us, as we release the strands we hold of another's guilt.
Don't let surface things delude us, but free us from what holds us back.
From you is born all ruling will, the power and the life to do,
The song that beautifies all; from age to age it renews.
I affirm this with my whole being.

Announcements

Sending Song: **All Earth is Hopeful (ELW 266)**



Benediction/Sharing of Peace

REMINDER

You should have received your Stewardship packet in the mail. Extra packets are available on the table outside of the Celebration room.
Please join us for Commitment Sunday on December 6th for worship at 8:30am or 10:30am. Remember to fill out your 2027 Stewardship Commitment Card and place it in the offering plate OR mail to Emmanuel in the enclosed envelope on or before December 2nd.



LET'S HAVE SOME FUN! **There will be a**



ST. NICHOLAS CELEBRATION following the 10:30am service on December 6th. Hot chocolate, fun, treats and a craft for the kids. St. Nick, himself, will be watching for you. All are invited.

Please sign up as to how many adults and children will be attending and if you would like to bring a treat. Sheet is located on the table outside of the Celebration room.

INTERFAITH POTLUCKS

All women are invited to attend the interfaith potluck listed below, which starts at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a dish to pass. Plates, silverware, and beverages will be provided.

- **Monday, November 30, 2026**, at Inscape Collective, 201 - 7th St., Rockford.

***** NO POTLUCK IN DECEMBER 2026.******

"MESSIAH"

The Rockford Choral Union will present its 80th annual performance of George Frideric Handel's "Messiah" at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church 920 Third Ave, Rockford. There is no admission charge and there are no tickets required. A voluntary offering will be taken during intermission. Handicap parking and ramp access is available in the North parking lot.

To Church Council & Exec.
Reminder: Annual Reports are due in the office by December 8th.

<u>Soul Garden Forest Preserve Walks</u>

Come hike for an hour in Winnebago Counties Forest preserves. Text Holly if you want to join the hikes: 815-543-1191. Meet at the Forest preserve entrances unless otherwise instructed.

Saturday, December 5, 10:00am
Rockford Rotary Forest Preserve, 5390 Rotary Road, Cherry Valley, IL 61063

Saturday, December 19, 10:00am
Kishwaukee River Forest Preserve
6303 Mulford Road & 5757 Blackhawk Road, Cherry Valley, IL



In Between

Breathe In-Between meets on Saturday, December 12th - 5:00 to 6:00 pm. Breathe In-Between is a "thread" to hold us all together in the months between meditation gatherings. Led by Christyn Rittenhouse, it is an opportunity for open-hearted soul talk. While many members know each other from other sources, Christyn is creating a time for us to get to know those we are not familiar with or get to know those we do know even better.
We will gather in the Benson Room! Questions? Text Catherine, <u>815-621-5329</u>



2026 Poinsettia Garden



If you would like a poinsettia in the Poinsettia Garden remembering or honoring your loved one, please complete this form and mail it to
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, P. O. Box 4362, Rockford, IL 61110
or bring it to the church office, or place in the offering plate.
Plants are $13.00.

All poinsettias may be picked up after the Christmas Eve. or December 27th Service. No names will be listed on the plants. If you would like to give a poinsettia to a shut-in, please plan arrangements for delivery.

If you choose, you may make a memorial donation in lieu of a plant.
All donations will be given to Emmanuel's general fund in memory or in honor of Loved Ones. Please make checks payable to Emmanuel Lutheran Church.

DEADLINE FOR POINSETTIA ORDERS IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9TH

I wish to order ____ Poinsettias. My check/cash for $_____ is enclosed.

Please list as follows: (Print)

In memory of:_____

*By:*_____

In honor of:_____

*By:*_____

*I am making a donation to Emmanuel in the amount of $*_____

*In memory of:*_____

*In honor of:*_____

*By*_____


MY SISTAS HOUSE
MINISTRIES INC.
HELP US FEED
100 FAMILIES
THIS CHRISTMAS
Share a meal. Spread joy. Make a difference.
DATE: 12/19 @ 2 p.m.
BUILDING NEW COMMUNITY CENTER
LOCATION: 920 3rd Avenue
TO DONATE, CONTACT:
Rev. Yvetta Yance
815-621-0973
Sharon Holloway
815-909-8813
MONETARY DONATIONS
Cash App: $Vettaj1963
Zelle: Use either contact number above