

The Emmanuel Envoy

December 2021

How are we, at Emmanuel, going to celebrate Christmas this year?

I usually start my Envoy article with a quote from the Bible, that has something to do with what my article is about. I thought about doing that again for this article, but then I realized, there is nothing in the Bible about celebrating Christmas. Of course, the stories that shape, at least the church/religious part of our Christmas celebration are found in the Bible, in the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John but there is nothing in the rest of the New Testament about the early Christians celebrating Christmas. So, I couldn't find a scripture verse that spoke to what has been on my mind a lot in recent months which is, "How are we, at Emmanuel, going to celebrate Christmas this year?"

Of course, I knew as December approached, that Christmas would look a lot more like past Christmases at Emmanuel and in our home, than last Christmas did, but I also knew that we probably weren't going completely back to the "way it used to be." The challenging reason for that is that we are still in the midst of a pandemic. Readily available vaccines for all except the youngest among us has made it possible for us to gather together in person again for many things, but we have still needed to take precautions, like mask wearing and distancing, to do what we can to protect young, unvaccinated children and people with compromised immune systems and to prevent breakthrough infections. The more joyful reason that Christmas 2021 won't look exactly like Christmas 2019, the last Christmas when things were "normal", is that this pandemic has given us the opportunity to create a new ministry. Zoom worship, which started as a necessity, has become a blessing, that enables us to include more people in our worship services, including people who do not live in our area and people who face health issues who might find it difficult or dangerous to gather in-person for worship.

As we've been heading into December the Worship Team, the Executive Committee, and the whole Church Council has been talking about how we should handle Christmas worship this year. As you probably know, Christmas Eve worship, especially our 5:00 p.m. service usually packed with people, with 150-170 people over the years, crammed into our sanctuary. It's a beautiful and inspiring thing to see so many people gathered to celebrate Jesus' birth. But this year, it seemed like a challenging thing. How could we handle that kind of crowd? We've talked about the possibility of removing the "every other pew" seating parameter that we've had since we reopened back in July, but ultimately, the Council decided this is not the right time to do that. After much discussion, thought, and prayer, the Council finally decided that the best way that we could handle Christmas Eve would be to have two in-person Christmas Eve services with limited capacity and ask people so make reservations to attend those services. We will also have a Zoom Christmas Eve service available as well.

So, here is how Christmas Eve (and Christmas Day) will work this year:

Christmas Eve Worship 4:30 p.m.

Please make a reservation to attend this service by calling or emailing the church office or by following this link to sign up: <https://www.emmanuelnorwood.org/christmaseve430/>

Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 p.m.

Please make a reservation to attend this service by calling or emailing the church office or by following this link to sign up: <https://www.emmanuelnorwood.org/christmaseve700/>

Christmas Eve Worship on Zoom 9:00 p.m.

The link for Christmas Eve worship will be emailed out in the days prior to Christmas Eve.

Christmas Day Worship on Zoom 10:00 a.m.

The link for Christmas Day worship will be emailed out in the days prior to Christmas Day.

We've made provisions to be able to have space available so that who might get the message to reserve their space for worship can be included in Christmas Eve in-person worship. But if you're reading this article and getting Emmanuel's emails, you're not one of those people. So, please reserve your space for Christmas Eve worship. Do it now, before you forget, though, rest assured, you'll be getting lots of reminders over the next 21 days to make a reservation if you're planning on coming for in-person worship on Christmas Eve.

I am so excited about worshipping with you for the rest of this Advent and during the Christmas season in-person and on Zoom. Even though things still look a little bit different than what we remember from before the pandemic, there are still all kinds of signs of God working in us and through us and for us during these seasons and celebrations. I'm grateful for all of the ways that we can be together to celebrate Christ's birth this year.

May we all have a blessed and holy Advent and a joyful and grateful Christmas!

In Christ,

Pastor Amanda



Prayer Concerns List

Susan Tomasello	Lyndsay Boysen
Bill Rapp	Tony & Sheri Nikolassy
Megan Nowak	Paul & Heather Crisafulli
Sam Richwine	Jon Pierce
Laurie Ann Friello	The Dimpel Family
Susan Tomasello	Lyndsay Boysen
Ann-Marie Litcof	Rebecca Sol
George Beaudoin	Danny Connolly
Bo Ruda	Jean Croll
Ann-Marie Litcof	Rebecca Sol
Iain McLane	Jovanni Sanchez-Colon
Micki Hein	



Thank You Notes

Dear 3rd & 4th Grade Sunday School Children,

Thank you for the lovely Thanksgiving Card – I really enjoyed it!

Ann Marie Blomquist



Dear friends at Emmanuel,

On behalf of the Norwood Ecumenical Community Food Pantry, thank you very much for all your support. We are most grateful for each and every food drive you run. Your generosity is amazing. We wish you all a very happy and healthy Thanksgiving.

Eileen Hickey



Dear Emmanuel – (especially Leslie, Lorraine and Susan),

Thank you for the lovely flowers you delivered, we really enjoyed them.

Louis & Helene Bier, Richard Bier, and David K.



To the kind folks of Emmanuel,

I thank you for your wonderful words and generous gifts in celebration of my 10-year anniversary as your Minister of Music! I enjoyed reading the paper cards and e-card, and will have a lot of fun with the Barnes & Noble gift card. The candy corn is long gone, you know me well.

The years have flown, and I'm happy to be on this journey with such a great group of people. I appreciate you all!

Sincerely

Gabby Heath

“Blue” Christmas Service

Advent and Christmas can be a difficult time for many, especially those who have lost loved ones, those who struggle with depression or anxiety, or who have experienced significant traumas. The Longest Night worship service at the First Congregational Church in Norwood will be a time to pray for the healing and light of Christ to enter into the places of struggle and sorrow. We will light candles and offer prayers. We will support one another as people on the journey of life and faith, and for whom this season brings tears as well as wonder.

Please consider joining in this ecumenical worship service **on Saturday, December 18th at 7 pm** at Grace Episcopal Church (150 Chapel Street). We look forward to the participation of members from a number of Norwood churches and from members of the wider community seeking the peace and light of Christ during challenging days.



Alumni Choir – on the Common !

The **Norwood Alumni Choir** annual Christmas concert will be held outdoors this year. It will be on Norwood Common on:

Thursday evening

December 23rd at 7:30 p.m.

Help Needed to Decorate for Christmas!



Saturday, **December 11th** at **10 am** to put up the Christmas tree and decorations in the sanctuary. We especially need a couple of tall people able to climb a ladder to place the top on our beautiful tree.

New Candles need a hand

We have new candles for the sanctuary windows this year – and don't you know it – our ribbons and greenery need to be re-configured to allow us to decorate the windows in a festive way. Is there a crafty person able to drop by the church office and have a look **BEFORE** the 11th? (and then perhaps get additional supplies if needed) Office is open Tues. – Fri 9am-2pm.

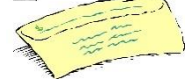


Altar Flowers For 2022

The 2022 Altar Flower Chart will **SOON** be posted in the Narthex. To sponsor a Sunday, please sign your name and phone number. Our Flower Coordinator, **Helen Bonaceto**, will contact you regarding the dedication and payment. We appreciate all those who help to adorn the sanctuary on Sundays with fresh flowers.

Offering Envelopes

Offering Envelopes



2022 Offering Envelopes are ready for pickup. You can find them in the hallway outside and across from the pastor's office.

Feel free to stop by during the week (Tues-Fri) when the office is open, to pick yours up can't on Sunday.

Reminder - In order to count financial gifts and pledges towards 2021 for both purposes of fulfilling pledges and receiving recognition from Emmanuel for tax purposes, all gifts, pledges and monies must be received in the church office by **Sunday December 26, 2021** in order to be counted for 2021. Thank you for your continued financial support of Emmanuel!

Christmas Services at Emmanuel



Christmas Eve – Dec. 24

4:30 p.m. In-Person Worship

Reservations requested--call or email the church office or use this sign-up genius link:

<https://www.emmanuelnorwood.org/christmaseve430/>

7:00 p.m. In-Person Worship

Reservations requested--call or email the church office or use this sign-up genius link:

<https://www.emmanuelnorwood.org/christmaseve700/>

9:00 p.m. Zoom Worship

Christmas Day – Dec.25

10:00 a.m. Zoom Worship

A Christmas Service of Readings and Carols

Sunday – Dec. 26

9:30 a.m. Zoom Worship

11:15 a.m. In-Person Worship

A service of lessons and Carols

Shopping with Amazon?



Did you know that if you shop with Amazon Emmanuel can receive a small percent of money based on the cost of your order your order?

To do this simply go to our website: www.emmanuelnorwood.org and scroll to the Amazon Shipping Link. Click through an intermediary page to get to Amazon. If you are not already signed up for Amazon Smile (through Emmanuel or another organization) you will be prompted to enroll and to select your charity. To select Emmanuel, you'll need to enter: Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church Norwood. From there just shop Amazon as you always do.

Emmanuel T-Shirts – a Great Gift!



Looking for a gift for one of your Emmanuel friends or family? Word on the street is, Emmanuel T-Shirts make GREAT Christmas gifts!

If you would like to purchase a shirt, they're \$15 each ---Adult sizes Small – Double X Large. You can check the shirts out in the Narthex coat closet. If you would like to purchase one, please speak to Pastor Amanda. The proceeds from the sale of the t-shirts will go to support the youth who will be attending the 2022 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN.

Update from “The Piecemakers”

The Piecemakers have decided to begin their work a bit earlier than usual in the upcoming season, which will mark our 13th year of quilting. Our first session will be held on **Saturday, January 8, 2022**, from 9 to noon. There are already many quilt tops in Kask Hall just waiting to be assembled, so we thought we would get a head start this year.



And, in order to provide guidance to anyone who would like to create a quilt top or learn how to hem an assembled quilt, we will have an informational session on the afternoon of **Saturday, January 15**, so that some of our more experienced members can share tips on how to choose fabric, how to measure and cut fabric, and how to seam pieces together. There will also be a demonstration of how to properly tuck quilt corners while sewing a zig-zag hem to finish a quilt.

In the past 12 years, The Piecemakers have made a total of 1,026 quilts. At this point, we are actively recruiting new members. If you know of someone who might enjoy being a part of this group, please ask that person to reach out to Susan Lawson at lawsue51@verizon.net or at

508-259-1062. Our circle is ready to expand and we are particularly hoping to attract a couple of talented seamstresses to assist with the work of hemming our quilts. That being said, participants do not need to know how to sew and all ages, from teens to seniors, are welcome!

Snow Storm Policy – New for 2021-22!

I can always get to church, but there are times when it is not safe or community minded for other people to venture out to come to worship.



The reality is that the church of Jesus Christ can never be closed. As long as the people of God engage in prayer for their neighbors, especially those who are put at risk because of dangerous weather, the work and worship of the church goes forward. But there are times when in person worship services can be “adjusted”.

This might not come up this coming winter (we can only hope), but if it looks like a storm is coming that will bring significant snow or other seriously dangerous weather to our area, then worship at Emmanuel will be moved online via Zoom only.

I will let people know about a Zoom service, by changing the phone message at church, sending out a mass e-mail, putting it on Facebook.

If you hear the words, “Blizzard expected Saturday into Sunday morning” next winter, chances are good that worship at Emmanuel will be only via Zoom!

Pastor Amanda





We welcome these new members of Emmanuel (from left to right):

Cathy Palotta, John Sera, Donna Sera, Mark Jean-Pierre, Morgan Jean-Pierre, Parker Jean-Pierre, Preston Jean-Pierre.

Please be sure to greet our new members and involve them in the life of our community.

Here is their contact information, so that you can get in touch:

Mark, Morgan, Preston, and Parker Jean-Pierre

61 Churchill Drive
Norwood, MA 02062

Morgan cell: 831-917-3095
Morgan email: mosera227@gmail.com

Mark cell: 910-459-6858
Mark email: markelly02@gmail.com

John and Donna Sera

61 Churchill Drive
Norwood, MA 02062

cell: 860-331-3617

email: dmsera9@gmail.com

Cathy Palotta

751 Lansdowne Way - Apt. 204
Norwood, MA 02062

email: cpalotta1969@gmail.com

Two Christmas Caroling Opportunities

Emmanuel will be going Christmas caroling twice this December. We'll be caroling to some of our own members and friends on **Friday, December 17th, 6:00-9:00** and we'll be a part of the Christmas parade for our neighbors at Charwell House on **Sunday, December 19th at 2:00 p.m.** If you're interested in coming along to spread some Christmas cheer, please put the dates on your calendar now.

You can sign up to participate in either or both of these opportunities by calling or emailing the church office, signing up on the sign-up sheets in the Narthex, or using these sign up genius lists:



Christmas Caroling December 17th 6:00-9:00 p.m.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080D4BAAA82FA2FE3-christmas>

Christmas Parade at Charwell House December 19th 2:00 p.m.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080D4BAAA82FA2FE3-christmas1>

Luminaries for Christmas Eve



Here's a way to help brighten our neighborhood for Christmas *and* to help the youth of our congregation get to the 2022 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Our youth are selling luminaries that will be set out around our church on Christmas Eve to share the joy of the birth of Christ, the light of the world, with each other and our neighbors.

For \$5.00 you can dedicate a luminary in memory or in honor of a loved one. The price covers the cost of the luminary and also will provide some income to help our youth fundraise for their trip next summer. Our goal is to get to 100 bags!

You can use this LINK -- <https://www.emmanuelnorwood.org/christmas-eve-luminaries/>

OR you can send in this form so that we will receive it BY – DECEMBER 19. We'll include names in a special bulletin insert at Christmas.

Name: _____

Number of Luminaries: _____ x \$5.00 = Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

In Honor of:

In Memory of:
