



Volume 51

Issue 12

Immanuel means ‘God with us’ or ‘God is with us’ and the name first appears in scripture in the 7th chapter of Isaiah.

King Ahaz is surrounded and besieged by Syria (Aram) and Israel (Ephraim) from the north, and the whole world knows that the Assyrians are coming right behind them... the Assyrians who have become the largest, most ruthless, and most wealthy nation in the world at this point (800-700 BC).

The Southern Kingdom of Judah and its capital, Jerusalem, is being pressured to give in to this invasion and siege and to submit to the anti-Assyrian alliance and join them in warring with the soon approaching Assyrian army, but King Ahaz knows that Judah is too small a nation with too small an army, and even teaming up with Syria and Israel would end in defeat by Assyria and certain death for himself. Perhaps if he resists the anti-Assyrian alliance he might ingratiate himself with the Assyrian King and avoid losing his own life and the lives of so many of his soldiers, guards, and administrators.

He does what kings did... he turned to his prophets. Isaiah shares with King Ahaz a word from the Lord. Stand firm, do not give in. He writes: The Lord will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isaiah tells Ahaz that things are really bad now... they’re low on food and clean water, the people are suffering under the invading armies, but there is hope. And you will see the hope when less than 9 months from now, this young woman is able to bear a healthy son. She will name him ‘God is with us’, and that son will eat rich foods before he grows up.

This is where this name that we associate with Christ comes from... a people suffering under invading armies receive a promise of deliverance in the sign of a newborn baby. This name - Immanuel - was a true sign for the Judeans centuries before, and it becomes true again (fully and completely true, we believe) in Jesus of Nazareth. Each advent we look for hope, and we reflect on what it means that God is with us - fully with us by Christ and in the Spirit. As we gather around the scriptures again this year, inspired by our advent theme: God With Us, may we be inspired anew to live hopeful, joyful, peaceful, and loving lives even in the hardest and darkest of days.

May it be so,
-Chad





At Lake Forest Presbyterian Church
We Gather for our Worship
each Sunday morning at 10:45 a.m.



We continue to offer a variety of options for joining in worship with us:

- Participating in person at our 10:45 a.m. worship service
- Participating in our live streamed service during the regular 10:45 a.m. worship time through our Facebook page.
- Viewing an archived video of our worship service, found on our Facebook page.

At this time, wearing masks is optional at all our church gatherings.



Nursery care
is provided
during
our
in-person
worship
service
each Sunday
at 10:45 a.m.



Our 10:45 a.m. worship service streams live each Sunday morning on the church's Facebook page. If you can't join us in person we invite you to participate with us in worship as our worship service streams online.

In our Sunday Worship Email, we send a link to our Facebook page where our live video feed is available. You will also find a .pdf of the bulletin in the weekly email as well, so that you can fully participate in the liturgy. If you miss viewing the service as it is streaming live at 10:45 a.m., an archive of the service will be available for viewing at your convenience after our 10:45 a.m. service ends on our Facebook page.

(The link to our Facebook page as well as the audio of each week's sermon and anthem can be found on our church's website as well.)



During our 10:45 a.m. worship service on December 3, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion.



Thirsty for thought-provoking discussions? Join us for Theology on Tap on Tuesday, December 12 at 6 p.m.

Engage in vibrant conversation about faith, life, and everything in between, all while enjoying good company and your beverage of choice. See you there!



Sunday, December 3, is our Stewardship Dedication Sunday.

Please prayerfully consider what you can give in the coming year to support the ongoing ministries of Lake Forest Presbyterian Church in 2024. Pledge cards will be available in the bulletin on that day.



Our Family Promise host week is December 3 - 10.



Our Lake Forest church family is providing 80 stockings to the 5th graders at Dogwood Elementary for Christmas this year. Every 5th grader will receive a stocking containing both useful and fun things. Please consider donating any of the items listed on the sign-up sheet or if you would like to contribute a donation for those items, Lindsay Johnson will do the shopping for you, as long as she has your donation BEFORE December 10. Please drop off your items in the choir room by Sunday, December 10. We will assemble the stockings after church on that Sunday! Simply use this QR code to view a list of the items we need and sign up for what you can bring or talk with Lindsay Johnson for more information.



Christmas Eve at Lake Forest

Our Christmas Eve
Candlelight
Worship Service
will be
Sunday,
December 24,
at 5:30 p.m.





Our 5th Sunday Offering for December
will be collected on Sunday, December 31,
to benefit John Knox Center.



John Knox Center holds a special place in the hearts of the Lake Forest church family. Our memories of Father-Son Camps and Family Camps spent at John Knox, provide us with a rich picture of how God uses this facility as a refuge for congregations, school groups, and other organizations across East Tennessee. The grounds and facilities provide a place where folks can get away from the distractions of everyday life to nurture their relationships with one another and renew their commitment to God. As the John Knox Center website explains, "Your gift gives memories. Your gift creates community. Your gift inspires connections. Your gift builds faith. The impact of your gift to John Knox Center lasts a lifetime in the hearts of the children and adults who experience God's love and beautiful creation." Please prayerfully consider what God would have you give on Sunday, December 31, so that we can make a meaningful difference by investing and partnering in the work of this facility that has made such a positive impact on our lives of those in our own church family. Please be sure to write on the memo blank of your check or on the outside of your offering envelope that your gift is designated for the "5th Sunday Offering for John Knox Center."



If you are unable to give on Sunday, December 31,
you may mail your donation to our church office:
Lake Forest Church, 714 Lake Forest Drive,
Knoxville, TN 37920





Our Choir Performance and Rehearsal Schedules

- Handbell choir will rehearse on Wednesday, December 6, Wednesday, December 13, and Wednesday, December 20, at 6 p.m. The Handbell choir will provide special music in our 10:45 a.m. worship service on Sunday, December 17. After the December 20 rehearsal, our handbell choir will take a break from rehearsals until Wednesday, February 7, when our rehearsals will resume at 6 p.m.
- Chancel choir rehearsal will be at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6, Wednesday, December 13, and Wednesday, December 20. Our chancel choir will present special music during our 10:45 a.m. worship service on December 24. There will be no chancel choir rehearsal on Wednesday, December 27, or Wednesday, January 3. Throughout the rest of January (January 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st) chancel choir will rehearse at 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday, February 7, chancel choir rehearsal will return to the regular time of 7 p.m.

Childcare is provided during our chancel choir rehearsal.

Our Handbell Choir Will Delight Us
With the Sounds of the Advent Season
Sunday, December 17, in our 10:45 a.m. worship service





On Sunday,
December 24,
at 9:30 a.m. our
Sunday School
will be a light,
optional
church-wide
breakfast and
fellowship time
with a short
devotional
for Christmas Eve.

Fish Hospitality Pantries

We are
currently
collecting
canned food
items

(canned
fruits, soups,
etc.) for the

FISH Hospitality Pantries. In
addition to these food items. the
FISH hospitality pantries also
especially need toiletry items
(toothpaste, soap, shampoo,
etc). Food items as well as
toiletries may be placed in the
collection bins that
are located in
the Narthex
and Gallery.



Monthly Financial Update



Throughout the
month of December
we will also
be collecting our
Birthday Offering
for Jesus.

OCTOBER 2023

Giving
Expenses

Operating

15,185.58
15,281.78

Surplus (Deficit)

(96.20)

YEAR-TO-DATE 2023

Giving
Expenses

Operating

145,754.74
166,713.16

Surplus (Deficit)

(20,958.42)





Our Youth Group is a Wednesday night program filled with fun, games, music and listening for God's Word. Our youth meet at 6:00 p.m. in the youth room on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday night of each month throughout the school year. We also look for opportunities throughout the school year to get outside the walls of the church to have fun as a group at some exciting events.

On Wednesday, December 6, our youth group will meet at 5:15 p.m. in the kitchen as we serve the Family Promise families who are staying in our church by preparing their evening meal.

Youth Sunday School classes meet each Sunday morning from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

- Middle School students are taught by Taylor Baker and Molly McGill.
- High School students meet with Michael Kelley and Penny Babelay.

There will be no Wednesday night activities on Wednesdays, December 27 and January 3.

For more information or if you would like to volunteer to be a part of the team that leads our youth on Wednesday nights throughout the school year, please email the church office at office@lakeforestpc.org



Children's Worship Group

is a fantastic way to teach our kids about God and have a blast doing it. We gather on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday nights of each month from 6-7 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We hope you will invite your friends to join us for this awesome part of our Wednesday night lineup of activities.

We offer Sunday School classes for children in every grade. These classes meet from 9:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. each Sunday in the educational wing of our church.

- Pre-K and Kindergarten children are taught by Debbi Potts and Karen Talley.
- Elementary school-age children are taught by Matt and Megan Talley.

There will be no Wednesday night activities on Wednesday, December 27, or Wednesday, January 3.

If you would like more information on our Children's ministry or have any questions concerning our children's program, you can contact our Christian Education & Discipleship Committee Chairperson - Bethany Maples or email us in the church office at office@lakeforestpc.org



Would you like to hear the stories of the Bible come alive to our Lake Forest kids? Why not consider becoming one member of our rotating team of

Children's Time Speakers?

Children's Time is a special moment during our Sunday morning worship service. During Children's Time we teach the truth of God's Word in ways specifically designed to touch the hearts of our children.

If you would be open to learning more about leading our Children's Time, or participating in training so that you can join the team of volunteers that serve our children in this way, please contact the church office at office@lakeforestpc.org.



OUR COMMITTEE CHAIRPEOPLE	
Building & Grounds	Personnel
Brad Johnson	Josh McGill
Christian Education	Spiritual Care
& Discipleship	Cathy Maples
Bethany Maples	Worship
Finance	Seth Maples
Josh McGill	

Our Session Meets on the third Sunday of each month immediately following our 10:45 a.m. service in the YAYF classroom.

The Session Will Meet:

December 17, 2023

Our Elders of the Month for December is:

Ben Thomas



December 2
- Melinda Watson

December 9
- John Bevis

December 5
- John Dunn III

December 10
- Ellisa Arnold

December 6
- Catie Orth

December 24
- Michael Kelley

December 7
- Ed Irvin

December 29
- Robert Huff

Did we miss wishing a "Happy Birthday" to someone who is a part of our church family?

If so, please help us keep our birthday list up-to-date by emailing us at office@lakeforestpc.org.



Prayers & PRAISES

Our Lake Forest Church family considers it a joy and privilege to pray for each other and watch to see how God answers our prayers. If you have a need - if you are facing a healthcare concern or crisis, have experienced the loss of a job, are grieving the loss of a loved one, or are asking God to work in a specific situation in your life that needs His powerful touch, please let us know

by emailing the church office at office@lakeforestpc.org so that we can pray for you. We send out a Prayers & Praises email each Thursday morning. And don't forget to send us updates as we walk this faith journey together.











Thanks for being a praying church family!



If you have an announcement about an upcoming event, a volunteer list, a committee meeting date and time, or any other information that needs to be included in the January 2023 issue of the Lake Forest FOCUS, please take a few minutes, as soon as you know the details, to email that information to: office@lakeforestpc.org

The deadline for the January FOCUS is Thursday, December 21.

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. In-person Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Livestream of our 10:45 a.m. service on Facebook	4 Lake Forest Neighborhood Association 7 p.m. 	5	6 Handbell Choir 6:00 p.m. Youth Group 5:15 p.m. (meet in the kitchen) Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Planned Childcare for Chancel Choir	7	8	9
 Dedication Sunday 1st Sunday of Advent		AA Meeting 7 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)				
10 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. In-person Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Livestream of our 10:45 a.m. service on Facebook	11	12 Theology on Tap - 6 p.m. Southside Garage  AA Meeting 7 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)	13 Handbell Choir 6:00 p.m. Children's Worship Group 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir 7:00 p.m. Planned Childcare for Chancel Choir	14	15	16
Deadline to bring items for Dogwood stockings 2nd Sunday of Advent						
17 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. In-person Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Livestream of our 10:45 a.m. service on Facebook  Special Music Handbell choir  Session Meets 3rd Sunday of Advent	18	19 AA Meeting 7 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)	20 No Handbell choir rehearsal Youth Group 6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir 6:30 p.m. Planned Childcare for Chancel Choir	21 Deadline for the January FOCUS 	22	23
24 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. In-person Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Livestream of our 10:45 a.m. service on Facebook Chancel choir special music 10:45 a.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 5:30 p.m. 4th Sunday of Advent	25  Merry Christmas!	26 AA Meeting 7 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)	27 No Regular Wednesday Night Activities	28	29	30
31 Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. In-person Worship Service at 10:45 a.m. Livestream of our 10:45 a.m. service on Facebook 5th Sunday Offering						



LAKE FOREST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

714 Lake Forest Drive
Knoxville, TN 37920
(865) 577-2800

Merry
Christmas!



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