

## God with Us

*“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). Matthew 1:23*

This is one of my most favorite Christmas passages. I love the name Immanuel and what it means, God with us. When Jesus came into this world as a baby, it was the greatest evidence of God being with us.

The world throws so many expectations at us during the Christmas season. We have the expectation to have the best Pinterest decorations, the best tree with lots of presents, family gatherings that look like Norman Rockwell paintings and baking dozens of Christmas cookies that create the most awesome aromas. So what do we do when these Christmas expectations let us down and don't measure up? Our budgets don't support all the latest and greatest toys and presents. We don't have time to decorate our homes to make the next issue of Home and Gardens. Our families fight and don't get along, and don't look anything like that beautiful portrait that hangs on the wall. Children get over tired and over stimulated, and melt down. Where does our Christmas love, joy, and peace come from?

The things of this world and human relationships let us down, but Jesus and all His promises are always with us. When our houses are a mess, Immanuel. When Christmas shopping becomes stressful, Immanuel. When family relationships let us down, Immanuel. When the Christmas to do list gets overwhelming, Immanuel. When our children throw temper tantrums, Immanuel. When ministry stresses overwhelm, Immanuel. When a health crisis attacks us, Immanuel.

Immanuel brings joy, hope, love and peace. He brings forgiveness when we forget the real meaning of Christmas. He brings forgiveness for broken relationships. Immanuel—God with Us!

Prayer: Dear Father, thank you for sending Immanuel into the world to bring forgiveness, hope, joy and peace. During this Advent and Christmas season help us remember Immanuel—God with us. As your servants in ministry, guide us and direct us as we share the message of Immanuel with a world that so desperately needs to hear the message of love, joy, hope, and peace. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Mrs. Donna Lucas, Principal. Abiding Savior Lutheran School