

FaithBIT



God with Us!

Reflection by Phil Weber

I had the privilege of leading Sunday school for our 5th and 6th graders (God Squad) this fall. As we discussed the many reasons we come to Immanuel each Sunday, the joy of meeting each other in this special place, and the message of love and acceptance that we carry with us when we leave each week and enter back into active lives at home, school, and work, we recalled the origin of our church's name—Immanuel, and the deep meaning it has for us in our lives as we experience both the certain joy of creation as well as the sadness of loss and grief in death.

In Hebrew, the name broken down to its roots by scholars, informs us that "Im or [with], nu [us], el [God], or Immanuel, appears two times in the Old Testament -first in Isaiah and again in Matthew. In Isaiah, the prophet foretells the miracle of Christ's birth and speaks of Mary, who will bear a son and will call Him Immanuel.



"...we are God's beloved children and He will always be with us."

- Phil Weber

Especially relevant to our discussion in class on Sunday is its occurrence in Matthew. For, as we share and marvel in the coming weeks together at Jesus' birth as told through the gospels of Luke and Matthew, we are arriving seven centuries later to a time when Joseph finds Mary with child. In Matthew 1:23 an angel from God joyously announces that the child shall be called, Immanuel—literally, God with us.

Our parting message to each other in the God Squad classroom on Sunday: No matter what difficulties, sorrows, or losses we endure, we take comfort in knowing that we are God's beloved children and that He will always be with us to help see us through. We walk as children of light, now and forever.

May all of us share in the joy of our Immanuel children as they listen, sing, learn, run, play, and share as children of light among us at Immanuel!

God with us!