

# The Emmanuel Epistle

*“Praising, Proclaiming and Practicing Emmanuel—God with us—in daily life!”*

## Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: The Good WORD!”

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with meekness and fear”—I Peter 3:15.

I Peter is a baptismal homily written to the scattered seeds of Asia Minor, the elect who are chosen for obedience to Jesus Christ & for sprinkling with His blood. “Baptism now saves you”—I Peter 3:21.

Martin Luther, commenting on I Peter 3:21, writes: “Now baptism is by far a greater flood than was that of Noah....Baptism drowns all sorts of men throughout the world, from the birth of Christ even till the day of judgment....[Noah’s flood] was a flood of wrath, this is a flood of grace.”

I’ve got a new friend. His name is Eric. He’s a brother in the Lord. He works, or shall I say, serves, at the Fareway Grocery Store in Rochester. What draws me to Eric is the love of Jesus. Eric wears a cross as he works. His Christ-centered, gentle demeanor, SHOUTS the love of Jesus!

One day, while wearing a clerical shirt, I picked up a



few items at Fareway. Eric looked at me and said, “So what’s the Good Word for today, Reverend?” I paused, stumbled a bit, and then answered, “It’s Jesus. It’s always Jesus. Jesus is the eternal Word of God; the Good Word; yesterday, today & forever!”

*“The Christian’s job is to bear full witness to the beauty and truth of the Gospel.”*  
—Carmen LaBerge

It’s not rocket science when it comes to sharing God’s Word & our faith with others. St. John writes, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made through Him. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.”

In 2017, Carmen LaBerge, a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary,

wrote a book entitled, “Speak the Truth: How to bring God back into every conversation”. Carmen reminds her readers that the baptismal calling of every child of God is to speak the TRUTH. Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through Jesus. Carmen invites us to walk the faith of Jesus in every arena of our life.

When communicating the TRUTH, Carmen reminds us of some important DO’s and DON’Ts. Don’t feel like you have to have something to say about everything. Don’t respond defensively. Don’t get in the way. It’s not about you. We are not the Good News. Jesus is the Good News. We are God’s ambassadors; agents of God’s grace. God’s plan isn’t going to fail, just because we fail. Remember, “Arguments are not won. People are won.”

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**August 2018  
Newsletter  
Volume 6  
Issue 8**

## *Food For Thought:*

*“We can’t speak the good news of the gospel in un-gospel ways.”*

ED STETZER

## **INSIDE AND BACK PAGE NEWS**

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### **National Night Out—Tuesday, August 7**

Emmanuel Lutheran received a \$250 Thrivent Action Team grant to assist us with our National Night Out (NNO) event on Tuesday, August 7 from 5:30-7:30pm. Due to the construction on 18th. Ave. (Oasis Church), Emmanuel will be hosting this year's NNO at the home of Pastor Dave & Julie (6330 Fairway Drive NW, Rochester). Root Beer Floats will be served. Bring a lawn chair & rub elbows with people in the Steffenson neighborhood. Serve up some ice cream & root beer, and share the faith of Jesus!

### **Women's Bible Study: "The Psalter"**

Women of Emmanuel will launch a new study on the **Book of Psalms** (The Psalter) on September 6.

We'll meet twice a month on Thursdays at Oasis Church at 1pm. **Dates:** Sept. 6 & 27; Oct. 4 & 25; Nov. 1 & 29; Dec. 6 & 13. The Psalter was Israel's Prayer Book and Hymn Book. Martin Luther saw the imprint of Jesus on every page of the Psalter. Let Pastor Dave know what your favorite psalms are so that we can be sure to study them in this class. Invite a friend & double your joy!

### **Byron Parade**

**Thanks** is offered to everyone who participated in making the presence of Emmanuel known at the Byron parade (July 22). It was a huge success! 4,193 pieces of candy were donated & distributed, along with 300+ planes & 180+ beach balls. The decorated float was amazing! Your prayers, participation, and presence was a gift of God. Thanks for practicing "Emmanuel" & sharing Jesus in daily life!

### **GOT Change?**

**Thanks** for offering your change as an investment in the future of Emmanuel. The coins are adding up for the glory of God. We've already reached our goal of \$500.00. Now we're working on our next \$500.00.

### **Coming in September!**

**Rally Day** for youth and adults will be on Saturday, September 8. Julie will be teaching Bible Stories to our little ones. Pastor Dave will be teaching "The Last Battle" by C.S. Lewis, to youth in grades 3 and following. The G.I.F.T. study will be on Mark Cahill's book, "One Thing You Can't Do In Heaven". Judy Pearce is looking for someone to team teach this class with her.

### **Emmanuel Potluck Picnic & Huddle Sunday, July 29 (12:00 Noon)**

Larry and Deb Vomhof are once again hosting this year's Emmanuel Potluck Picnic at their home. This is our fifth year of gathering as a church family. Each year we enjoy excellent food and fellowship. Meats and Beverages will be provided. Bring a dish to share! We'll eat at 12:00 Noon, but participants are welcome to arrive at the Vomhof home any time after 11:30am (11530 Hwy 52 SE, Chatfield, MN).

The day will also include an Emmanuel Huddle where a report will be given regarding our recent Dinners for 8 & the "Building for the Future" fund.

### **On Reconnect One: "In the Way"**

I wasn't trying to eavesdrop, but I also couldn't help but hear the grunting accusation, "Get out of my way. You're always in the way!" I looked at the defeated face of the child doing her best to steer clear of the cart her mother was maneuvering through the grocery store aisle. And figuring I had one second to respond before the window of opportunity closed, I blurted out, "Oh! I'm so sorry! I didn't realize I was in the way!" The woman looked up with a furrowed expression and the child smiled slightly in my direction. I heard myself say, "You know I get in the way a lot. I'm a Christian and I like to think I'm following Jesus in the Way, but sometimes I just get in the way!" The woman's expression softened and the tightness melted from her shoulders. She stood there staring at me over her grocery cart and then she looked at her daughter. "Jenny, I'm so sorry. You're not in my way." Jenny rushed in for a deep hug and I turned my cart and walked away – feeling I had gotten in the way, again. (From: "The Reconnect with Carmen LaBerge").

"God has not abandoned America, but Christians are withdrawing from God." "It's important to ask: 'Are people just getting a piece of my mind or are they getting the peace of the mind of Christ?'"

Carmen LaBerge

### **Work Week at Oasis Church**

**August 13-17**, replacing windows in the Oasis fellowship hall. If you would like to volunteer to serve, please contact Dave Hammond at #507-271-4726 or DavHam60@gmail.com.

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What are some of the DO's? Pray for the soil that God is preparing. God always goes before us. Get prayed up! We have divine appointments. Focus on people, not issues. Relationships matter. We need to do our homework. Know the Word. What is the hope that is within you? We can “make a defense to anyone who asks us for a reason for the hope that is in us”. We can do it without getting defensive or argumentative. We can do it with meekness and reverence.

A pastor friend recently said to me, “We preach Law and Gospel, but sometimes people don't see joy in our words of gospel or tears in our words of law.” Carmen LaBerge shares this story: “I was getting coffee at the local Starbucks. A young gal was seated at the common table, doodling. I noticed the gal's drawings, sat down by her, and said, ‘I see that you are drawing some very dark pictures.’ The gal appeared to be suicidal. I arranged to meet up with her again the next day. But on the next day she was a ‘no show’. She did however leave a note with the barista that said, ‘You're one of those nasty Jesus people’—signed Sarah. I was in tears. I wept as I exited out to my car. I sat in my car crying. Then there was a knock on the passenger window. It was Sarah. For several minutes we visited through the car window about her caustic note. A few weeks later I found a note on the windshield of my car from Sarah. It said, ‘Thanks for being a perfect stranger.’” We are responsible for bringing the presence of Christ into the lives of others.

We are God's mouthpieces, bearers of God's Good Word. “What's the Good News, preacher?” Thanks for asking Eric. The answer is always Jesus. May God help us get Jesus back into every conversation. What better word have we to offer than the WORD of God? The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us full of grace and truth. Jesus Always!

Conversant with the WORD, Pastor Dave

## WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR AUGUST—Pastor Dave preaching; except Aug. 18

### Saturday, August 4 - Pentecost XI (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Larry Vomhof

Ushers: Larry Vomhof & Joe Vomhof

Coffee: Judy Pearce

Acolyte: **PENDING**

PIANIST: Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Sound: Deb Vomhof

Treats: Judy Caudill & Deb Vomhof

### Saturday, August 11 - Pentecost XII (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Deb Vomhof

Ushers: Darald & Leitha Bothun

Acolyte: **PENDING**

PIANIST: Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Barb Steffenson

### Saturday, August 18 - Pentecost XIII (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce

Ushers: **PENDING**

Acolyte: **PENDING**

PIANIST: Karen Salz

Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Judy Pearce

### Saturday, August 25 - Pentecost XIV (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Bob Harms & Arne Nelson

Acolyte: Mason Edwards

PIANIST: Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Samia Nelson & Marcia Harms

**NOTE:** Julie Steffenson will take care of set up. Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Rev. Fred Morck will be our guest preacher on Saturday, August 18 while Pastor Dave is at the NALC Convocation.

## “Building for the Future”—A Shared Vision

A summary of comments from the Dinners for 8 is being presented at the Emmanuel Church Picnic (July 29). Here are a few ticklers: We will maintain a strong sense of Community—a warm and welcoming environment—where those who worship at Emmanuel are valued, and all experience the gift of family. We will grow the worship life of our congregation, while maintaining solidarity with our core values and beliefs. We will remain solidly confessional, conservative and orthodox. We will live within our means and secure financial stability and sustainability. We will enhance the visibility of Emmanuel and grow the footprints of Jesus in our Community. We will find a church site where form follows function.

## Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

### Contact Information:

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**507-206-3048 (Home)**  
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### SAVE THE DATES!

*\* Children's Christmas Nativity will be held on Saturday, Dec. 22 (6pm).*

*\* 12 Days of Christmas Bell Ringing Service will be held on Saturday, January 5 at 6pm*

## Purchase the Lutheran Study Bible Top 12 Reasons

This month: Reasons 10 & 9. Last month: Reasons 12 & 11.

#10. The Lutheran Study Bible has better cross-references than any other study Bible available today, carefully prepared & supplemented with historic Lutheran cross-references and notes dating back to the Luther Bible of 1534. It is chock-full of historic Lutheran goodness.

#9. The Lutheran Study Bible has thirty-six custom-designed maps, which are linked to over 880 references throughout the Bible, more map references than any other Bible. Especially helpful for some of us who refuse to stop and ask for directions.

Next Month: Reasons #8 and #7. If you can't wait, contact Pastor Dave & he'll email you all 12 reasons.

### Emmanuel Offers Sympathies and Prayers!

Hank Elling, beloved father of Michelle Paxson, died on July 4. A Memorial Service was held in Tacoma, WA for Hank and his wife Cathy on Saturday, July 14. Michelle's mother, Cathy, went home to be with the Lord on March 8. Hank and Cathy fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith. In Christ, they receive the crown of righteousness. May God continue to comfort Michelle, her husband Dean, and the entire Elling family as they grieve the passing of their loved ones!

## Back Page Stories

### Madonna Towers Ministry:

Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel twice a month on Wednesdays in 2018. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, August 1 & 8 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

### Church Council Highlights—

**July 12:** June Income was \$8,779, with expenses of \$7,431. Presently, we have cash resources of around \$120,000.00; much of which is designated for the "Building for the Future" Fund. Emmanuel will receive

\$2,500 from Rushford Lutheran Church in July. Pastor Dave will be on Jury Duty during the first two weeks of August. The Emmanuel Picnic will be hosted at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof on July 29; which will also include an Emmanuel Huddle, where input from the Dinners for 8 will be shared. Two exciting events are in the works for Emmanuel: Byron Parade on July 22 & National Night Out on Aug. 7. A 2018 Discipleship Covenant for Barbara Steffenson was approved. Decisions about worship times for Thanksgiving & Christmas are pending. Next Council Meeting will be on Friday, August 3 (10am).

**WELCOME:** Emmanuel Lutheran welcomes its two newest members: Barbara Steffenson (Discipleship

Covenant), who recently moved to Rochester from the Twin Cities; and Everly Louise Wanek (Baptized on July 28), daughter of Andrew & Larisa.

**Men's Morning Bible Study:** The men of Emmanuel Lutheran meet on Tuesday mornings (8am) at Oasis Church for Bible Study and fellowship. The men are currently studying the Book of Acts & discussing the gift of Witnessing in Daily Life. Join us for conversation and coffee!

### "Rock the Red Kettle"

*Salvation Army kickoff: Bell Ringing at the HyVee North (Circle Drive) on Saturday, November 17 from 9am-5pm*

**Pastor Dave is taking Monday as his weekly day off. Please call for emergencies only. Thanks for your partnership in ministry!**