

# THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

## Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: Tipping Point”

Let’s talk about the word TIP. Many definitions abound. A tip can be the pointed end of pen; the pointed or rounded end or extremity of something slender or tapering. A tip can also be an offering of advice or the revealing of secret information (*secret family recipe*).

Sometimes we struggle to find the right word to use, or experience a failure of retrieval, when it’s right on “the tip of the tongue.” The tip of the iceberg is the small evident part or aspect of something largely hidden; i.e. evidence of a much bigger problem which lays below the surface. To tip something is to cause it to bend over or pour out. When enough momentum is achieved, one reaches what is called “the tipping point”. A tip can also be a gratuity.

While on vacation, I read an interesting article in the USA Today Newspaper. It was entitled, “Should you tip your flight attendant?” I must admit that have never been a big fan of tipping, i.e. offering a gratuity for service rendered. My dad always taught me to do my best and give my best without expectation of a bonus. Sometimes tipping is required or expected in a restaurant. But does tipping actually improve service, or does it become entitlement,



or a subsidy for employees who are underpaid by their employers? Studies reveal that tipping is “often discriminatory or arbitrary: workers receive different levels of gratuity based on factors such as age, sex, race, hair color and even breast size, and the size of the gratuity is found to be only very weakly related to the quality of service.”

*“The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire.”*  
— [Malcolm Gladwell](#)

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus says, “Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and recline at table’? Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’? Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also,

when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’”  
—Luke 17:7-10.

Discipleship is our duty. Don’t expect a gratuity from God. Discipleship is our privileged vocation. Being caked in the dust of Rabbi Jesus is thanks enough. We can never put God into our debt. God doesn’t owe us a tip. God is better than a Big Tipper. God gives us His only begotten Son and releases us from our endless bondage to sin and death. We owe God a gratuity of gratitude: “*Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were an offering far too small; Love so as mazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.*”—LBW #482

During our vacation, we treated our family to a nice meal at Texas Roadhouse. Our server was a man named Chris. He was overly pleasant. Maybe he was being nice in hopes of getting a big tip. When it came time to pay our bill, we presented four rewards coupons for our four

—Cont. on page 3

July 2017  
Newsletter  
Volume 5  
Issue 7

THANK YOU  
GOD  
FOR BLESSING ME  
MUCH MORE  
THAN I DESERVE

### INSIDE AND BACK PAGE NEWS

<i>A Pipe Organ?</i>	2
<i>Thrivent Action Team National Night Out</i>	2
<i>This Fall: The Chronicles of Narnia</i>	2
<i>Since You Asked</i>	2
<i>Worship Servants for July 2017</i>	3
<i>Intentional Acts of Kindness</i>	4
<i>Church Picnic</i>	4
<i>Back Page Stories “Council Highlights”</i>	4

## A Pipe Organ for Worship

Did you know that Oasis Church has a beautiful Pipe Organ? Apparently, it was donated by Dr. Peter Dyck and his wife Isabelle about 30 years ago. It is hidden from view by a wall in the front of the Oasis Worship Space. The organ hasn't been used for quite some time. Recently, a designated gift was given to Emmanuel Lutheran Church to have the organ tuned so that we can use it from time to time in our worship services. While we continue our search for our new church musician, we are fortunate to have three gifted musicians willing to play for our worship services. On Saturday, July 29, Rev. Scott Schilbe, a gifted organist, will be our worship musician, and he will accompany our worship on the Pipe Organ.

## SATURDAY SCHOOL & G.I.F.T.

Saturday School for kids, and G.I.F.T. for adults, resumes on Saturday, September 9. Current plans for G.I.F.T. in the fall include a four week study on the Letter of Jude, led by Pastor Waldemar Gies. The Letter of Jude is only 25 verses long, but cites nine different examples of God's judgment from the Old Testament. Jude exhorts his readers to beware of false teachers. G.I.F.T. will also be discussing "Decision Making as One Ages", "The Legacy of Luther, & "Islam" in the fall. Julie Steffenson has some exciting plans for the fall for our young people.

## WORSHIP MUSICIAN - update

We are still searching for a Worship Musician. Let Pastor Dave know if you hear of someone who is a gifted pianist, and/or organist, looking for an opportunity to serve in Worship. God has faithfully provided Emmanuel with substitute worship musicians for the summer. Special thanks to Karen Salz, Pastor P.J. Stohlmann, and Rev. Scott Schilbe who are accompanying our worship services during the month of July.

## Confirmation Class: The Chronicles of Narnia

Change of plans! Pastor Dave will be leading a class on C.S. Lewis' "The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe" in the fall. This class will explore the message of Redemption in the name of Jesus. Youth in grades 3-8 are invited to participate. Deb Vomhof will be assisting our Pastor with this class.

## SINCE YOU ASKED...

What does the Pastor's Stole signify? (the stole is the colored strip of cloth that loops around the back of the neck and hangs from both shoulders)

The stole represents a yoke such as would be used to link and employ an ox with a plow or cart. When a work animal is yoked to a task, that animal comes under the rule and guidance of its master. As Christians we are to be yoked to Christ (e.g. Matthew 11:28-30). We are to fear, love, serve, and obey the Lord Jesus Christ. The Pastor's stole is not only a sign of ordination in the Lutheran Church, but it visibly reminds the whole congregation of our servanthood to Christ.

The colors and symbols on the stole reflect the Season of the Church Year we find ourselves in. As such, the stole is a vessel of proclamation.

## THRIVENT ACTION TEAM!

Emmanuel Lutheran has received a \$250.00 Action Team grant from Thrivent for our **National Night Out event**. Neighborhoods are encouraged to interact with each other and to experience community on the first Tuesday of August each year. This year, on National Night Out (Tuesday, August 1), Emmanuel Lutheran will host an event in the Oasis Church Parking Lot (5-9pm). We'll move indoors in the event of rain. We plan on serving Root Beer Floats and other goodies. Other ideas include: outdoor music, activities for the kids, and a *Door Prize*. A local furniture store is donating a reading chair for the door prize. We'll have a box full of religious children's books to go along with the chair. What a great way to invest in community & offer hospitality to our neighbors. Contact Pastor Dave & Julie if you would like to get involved in this activity.

## Electronic Giving

Members wishing to contribute to Emmanuel Lutheran with automatic giving may do so by contacting Judy Caudill or Deb Vomhof. Offerings are transferred once a month on the 15th of the month. Thanks for supporting the holy work of God at Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Rochester, MN.

—Cont. from page 1

grandchildren, entitling them to a free meal (a reward for a school reading program). The server said that we could only use one of the coupons. My son informed our server that the coupons clearly say “one coupon may be used with each paying adult”. We had six adults in our party. The server went back to check with the manager. When he returned, his demeanor had changed. He had lost the bounce in his step. His smile was more of a frown. Perhaps he thought, a hundred dollar bill being reduced to \$80.00 meant less of a tip. The problem with expecting a gratuity is that attitude and performance become a gimmick or a game. Well guess what? We left Chris, our server, a \$30.00 tip; not because he deserved it, but because we were in a generous and celebrative mood.

Should we tip our Flight Attendant? Janice Booth writes, “Unless she saves your life by performing the Heimlich... don’t tip.” Waving a buck at your flight attendant could create an unintended consequence, namely, another class of tip-dependent employees, where employees are expected to subsist on the customer’s good will.

When my daughter was in third grade she memorized the 66 books of the Bible. I asked her, “Why memorize when you can simply look up the Books of the Bible in the Index and turn to the page number?” She replied, “Dad, that takes too long.” I asked my daughter what she thought about having the congregation clap when she sang in the kids choir at church. She replied “I like it, because it lets me know that I did a good job.” I replied, “So if the congregation doesn’t clap, does that mean that you did a bad job?” Then I asked, “Why don’t we clap for acolytes and Scripture readers?”

When it comes to tipping, here’s the point I’m trying to make: Let’s do what we do with excellence & good will for the glory of God and the good of others. We servants have a duty; a holy delight. We don’t need or deserve thanks, but God does. Should we tip a pastor because he or she has a great sermon? Or should we say thanks be to God for good service. Being generous and celebrative should be expected. Not because the server deserves our tipping, but because the one who serves is served, and needs to be a Big Tipper. So go ahead and make someone’s day. Reach the Tipping Point!

*Gratuitous in the Name of Jesus, Pastor Dave*

*p.s. Here’s a tip: GO TO CHURCH!*

## WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR JULY

<p><b>Saturday, July 1 - Pentecost IV (6pm)</b>            Scripture Reader: Matt Serr            Ushers: Rich Sunde &amp; Bob Harms            Acolyte: PENDING</p>	<p>PIANIST: Rev. P.J. Stohlmann (Holden Evening Prayer)            Communion Assistant: Jenna Serr            Sound &amp; Coffee: Don &amp; Peg Holtan            Treats: Judy Caudill</p>
<p><b>Saturday, July 8 - Pentecost V (6pm)</b>            Scripture Reader &amp; Prayers: Darald Bothun            Ushers: Darald &amp; Leitha Bothun            Acolyte: PENDING</p>	<p>PIANIST: Karen Salz (WOV — Bread of Life)            Communion Assistant: Leitha Bothun            Sound &amp; Coffee: Don &amp; Peg Holtan            Treats: Leitha Bothun</p>
<p><b>Saturday, July 15 - Pentecost VI (6pm)</b>            Scripture Reader &amp; Prayers: Lee Pearce            Ushers: Bob Harms &amp; Arne Nelson            Acolyte: PENDING</p>	<p>PIANIST: Rev. Scott Schilbe (LBW Setting II)            Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce            Sound &amp; Coffee: Don &amp; Peg Holtan            Treats: Judy Pearce (Fellowship (Hall)</p>
<p><b>Saturday, July 22 - Pentecost VII (6pm)</b>            Scripture Reader: Julie Steffenson            Ushers: LeRoy Quam &amp; Dick Stanley            Acolyte: PENDING</p>	<p>PIANIST: Rev. P.J. Stohlmann (Holden Evening Prayer)            Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson            Sound &amp; Coffee: Don &amp; Peg Holtan            Treats: Jean Wanek</p>
<p><b>Saturday, July 29 - Pentecost VIII (6pm)</b>            Scripture Reader &amp; Prayers: Deb Vomhof            Ushers: Larry &amp; Deb Vomhof            Acolyte: PENDING</p>	<p>ORGANIST: Rev. Scott Schilbe (LBW Setting II)            Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof            Sound &amp; Coffee: Don &amp; Peg Holtan            Treats: Deb Vomhof</p>

**NOTE:** Julie Steffenson will take care of set up, & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Note: Julie will be gone on July 15, so others will need to attend to set up duties. Pastor Dave will be our preacher each week, except July 15 when Pastor Waldemar Gies will be our guest preacher & worship leader.

## Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

1815—38th Street NW  
Rochester, MN 55901  
Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

### Contact Information:

253-302-9845 (Mobile)

507-206-3048 (Home)

pastordavesteffenson@gmail.com



### Save the Date!

*\*August 1 (5-9pm): Emmanuel hosting National Night Out*

*\*Sunday, August 6 (12:00 Noon) Emmanuel Church Picnic at the home of Larry & Debbie Vomhof!*

## Intentional Acts of Kindness!

Are you a random sort of a person? Do you plan out everything with intentionality, or do you operate with spontaneity and unpredictability? What exactly does it mean to perform “random acts of kindness?” Are Christ-Followers expected to be random workers of righteousness, or deliberate practitioners of mercy, kindness and love? Emmanuel Lutheran is in the process of applying for a Thrivent Action Team grant in support of “intentional acts of kindness”. Here’s the plan: Tentatively, on Wednesday, July 26, Servants of Emmanuel will visit a local laundromat and put quarters into the washing machines, gifting patrons with the joy of getting their clothes washed for free! More details will be coming your way. Wouldn’t it be fun to make someone’s day in an unexpected way. We could even serve coffee, lemonade and goodies. Imagine putting quarters into a washing machine and saying, “Thanks for letting me serve you in the name of Jesus.” If someone asks, “Why are you doing this?” We can reply, “Jesus washed away my sins. This is the least I can do for you. Have a blessed day!” Contact Pastor Dave & Julie if you want to get in on some “intentional” fun & kindness.

## Emmanuel Church Picnic

Larry and Deb Vomhof will be hosting our annual church picnic on Sunday, August 6 at 12:00 Noon. Meats and beverages will be provided. Bring side dishes and desserts to share with your church family. Bring a swimsuit if you plan on swimming. Enjoy an afternoon of fun & fellowship.



## Back Page Stories

**Women’s Bible Studies:** The Afternoon and Evening Women’s Bible Study groups have ended their studies and will begin new studies in the fall. Women of the Word, thanks for making God’s Word a priority in your lives!

**Supermarket Saturday:** The next Channel One ministry opportunity is July 15, 2017 (9 am—Noon).

**Madonna Towers Ministry:** Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel twice a month on Wednesdays in 2017. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our com-

munity. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, July 5 & 12 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

**Church Council Highlights - June 2:** A mid-year financial review by the Audit Committee is scheduled for July 15. Emmanuel members participating in electronic giving provide monthly offerings of \$2,430. Our YTD Budget income is \$40,754. Our YTD Budget expenses are \$43,344, producing a shortfall of \$2,590. We budgeted to use \$17,854 of our Reserves to cover a budgeted shortfall. Council approved the use of \$2500 for outside lighting; funding from Designated Gifts. Projects in process: Emmanuel First Aid Kit

and First Aid/CPR training; Picture Directory and Historical Narrative; updating our outside signage; & finding a permanent worship musician. Our Nominating Committee (Leitha Bothun, Jean Wanek, Jenna Serr, and Julie Edwards) need to begin their work. Council discussed the need and desire to purchase land as a future church building site. Discussed adding a Deacon to the Church Council. Hope Serr’s membership was approved. The next Council Meeting is Thursday, July 6 at 10am.

**Marks of Discipleship:** Signposts guide our way—Disciples seek to pray daily, worship weekly, grow spiritually, read & study Scripture on a regular basis, serve others, share the good news, & give generously.