

The Emmanuel Epistle

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: “An Open Door”

In the Book of Revelation, Jesus speaks promising words: “Behold I stand at the door & knock. If anyone hears my voice & opens the door, I will come in to him & eat with Him and he with me.” The seven letters to the 7 churches in Asia Minor end with an open door invitation. Chapter 4 begins with these hope-filled words: “After this I looked and behold a door standing open in heaven.” God has an open door for you!

When Jesus wrote to the church in Philadelphia, He introduced Himself as “the Holy One, the True One, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.” Jesus knows the works of His beloved saints in Philadelphia. He offers his seemingly powerless servants an evangelical opportunity. They can focus on their trials & tribulations, hardships & persecutions, or they can bear witness to the Lamb who was slain and has begun His reign.

Doors are important. They serve many purposes. There are by-fold doors on closets, pocket doors for bathrooms, Dutch doors for church nurseries, garage doors, insulated doors, revolving



doors, sliding glass doors, etc. Doors provide access, privacy, confinement, and security. God has an open door for you. His name is Jesus. The Good Shepherd says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I, I Am The Door of the sheep. If anyone enters by me he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture”—John 10.

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. Oh, the places you’ll go! Except when you don’t. Because, sometimes, you won’t.”

—Dr. Seuss

The fields are white for harvest, but the laborers are few. The decision is yours! An open door is a symbol of boundless opportunities. Jesus is an open door for you! Columbia researcher, Sheena Iyengar, has found that the average person makes about 70 conscious decisions every day. That’s 25,550 decisions a year.

Over the course of 70 years, that’s 1,788,500 decisions. “Life is the sum of all your choices” (Albert Camus).

John Ortberg in his book, All the Places To Go, writes about “divine opportunity alertness.” Be on the alert! An open door, biblically speaking, is an opportunity to bless someone else. “An open door may be thrilling to me, but it doesn’t exist solely for my benefit.” What to do? How to decide? Which door to walk through? God gives us the certainty of a compass, but not the precision of a roadmap.

Choosing a door is rarely easy. What if I get it wrong? When I moved from Lake Lillian, MN, to Little Falls, MN, someone asked, “How did you know that God wanted you to say yes to the call?” To this day, I still don’t know if I got it right. But I do know this: God can use me to bless others wherever I am, if I seek to serve Him and

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Food For Thought:

“When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.”

—Alexander Graham Bell

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Men's Bible Study: Fall of 2019

The men of Emmanuel will continue to meet on Tuesday mornings throughout the summer and into the fall. Each week we will study, discuss, and meditate upon the appointed psalm for the week. This fall, we will launch into a new study. The new study will be about 16 weeks in length & will look at one of our Lutheran Confessional documents, entitled the Augsburg Confession. In 1530, the Lutheran reformers presented a statement of faith to the Holy Roman Emperor in the town of Augsburg, Germany. This statement of faith became known as the Augsburg Confession. This document was penned by Luther's dear friend Philip Melancthon, and is considered to be the bedrock & summary of what it means to be Lutheran. The Augsburg Confession is a true confession of the Christian faith because Christ Himself is expressed in it. This study is an opportunity for growing deeper in one's Lutheran identity & walk of discipleship. Available for purchase: The Augsburg Confession (\$5.00) or the Book of Concord (\$35.00) - Concordia Reader's Edition. Contact Pastor Dave Steffenson if you want to purchase one of these resources. It will be an investment in your faith walk with Jesus.



7th Annual Mega Kid's Camp

Record enrollment—275+ kids already signed up.
Dates: Monday-Thursday, July 29-August 1. Cost: \$40 per youth. Adult volunteers needed. Visit:
www.evangelum.org.

National Night Out

This year's neighborhood celebration event will be held on Tues. August 6. Let's apply for a Thrivent Action Team grant and host several Emmanuel Root Beer Stands in various members' locations. Anyone interested? Contact Pastor! Pastor Dave & Julie Steffenson are hosting a stand at their home!

Emmanuel T-Shirts & Yard Signs

Advertising Emmanuel is our God-given mission. T-Shirts that say, "I Love My Church" & Yard Signs that say, "I Love Jesus" have been ordered. Garage sales and campaign signs may be fun, but JESUS is always #1. Thanks for promoting the good news of Jesus! We are clothed so to speak!

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR JULY

Saturday, July 6 - Pentecost IV (6pm)

Scripture Reader: Julie Steffenson
 Ushers: Creig Anderson and Rich Sunde
 Acolyte: **PENDING**

Saturday, July 13 - Pentecost V (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Darald Bothun
 Ushers: LeRoy Quam and Bob Harms
 Acolyte: Elijah Matske

Saturday, July 20 - Pentecost VI (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Deb Vomhof
 Ushers: Larry Vomhof & Joe Vomhof
 Acolyte: Nora Serr

Saturday, July 27 - Pentecost VII (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Darald Bothun
 Ushers: Brock Edwards & Matt Serr
 Acolyte: Mason Edwards

PIANIST: Karen Salz (Holden Evening Prayer)
 Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill
 Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
 Treats: Julie Steffenson

PIANIST: Mary Ann Groven
 Communion Assistant: Leitha Bothun
 Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
 Treats: Jean Wanek

PIANIST: Mary Ann Groven
 Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof
 Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
 Treats: Deb Vomhof

PIANIST: Beth Daede
 Communion Assistant: Leitha Bothun
 Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
 Treats: Leitha Bothun

NOTE: Julie Steffenson will take care of set up & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Pastor Dave will be our worship leader and preacher each week. Greeters for the month are **PENDING**.

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to honor His name! And I know this: We are marked by the doors we go through & by the doors we don't.

Ortberg writes, “‘Open door’ isn't a phrase to describe just any opportunity. An open door is an opportunity provided by God, to act *with* God & *for* God.” Jesus is *the* Door & the Holy Spirit is the opener. God opened a door for Abraham and Sarah, and they passed through it. Jesus opened a door and said to four fishermen, “Follow me.” And immediately they left their nets and passed through the open door. Every day God is opening doors for us to pass through. Decision making is unavoidable. Play it safe and live with regrets, or take a leap of faith and risk it all for heaven's sake.

Are you a closed-door person or an open-door person? In the Bible, when God calls someone to do something, no one responds by saying, “I'm ready!” Moses said, “I don't communicate well.” Jeremiah said, “I'm only a youth.” Isaiah said, “I'm a man of unclean lips.” Esther said, “If I approach the king without being summoned, I'll be put to death.” Sarah laughed and said, “I'm almost 90 and motherhood has passed me by.” Open-door people have their doubts, but they aren't hindered by uncertainty. They don't let ambiguity and risk paralyze them. Open-door people are blessed to bless, resist and persist, have fewer regrets, embrace excellent mistakes, accept their own imperfections, & trust in a Promising God. God still calls. God still sends. And if you say, “YES”...Oh the places you'll go!

An Open-Door Child of God, Pastor Dave

EMMANUEL

HUDDLE Highlights



On Saturday, June 8, members of Emmanuel huddled up! Important matters were discussed.

Arne Nelson has offered our Church five acres of land for the price of \$75,000. The land is located on the NW corner of 75th Street N and 18th Ave. Our building team (Larry Vomhof, Lee Pearce & Darald Bothun) are doing due diligence to make sure that we'll be able to build our future church on this site should we decide to purchase the 5 acres. Once a driveway provides access to the property, we'll have a “congregational field trip” so that member of Emmanuel will have a chance to visit and prayerfully consider the site.

Other matters discussed at our huddle included: The Byron Parade (Sunday, July 21 at 3pm); Mega Kids Camp (July 29-August 1); Emmanuel Picnic at Vomhof's (Sunday, August 4 at Noon); National Night Out—hosting sites (Tuesday, August 6); the Oasis Lease Agreement; and Thrivent Choice Dollars & Action Team grants. Updated Member Contact Lists were also distributed.

God is opening doors all the time. Will we say YES to the ministry opportunities in front of us, or will be stymied by uncertainty & ambiguity?

Wendy's Promotes Adoption

Did you know that Dave Thomas, founder of the Wendy's food chain, was adopted? Just .03 percent of Planned Parenthood's services includes adoption referrals. Some of the major donors for Planned Parenthood include Netflix, Ben & Jerry's, and Converse. Wendy's has a different agenda.

The “Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption” is a national, nonprofit public charity dedicated exclusively to finding permanent homes and loving families for the nearly 155,000 children waiting in North America's foster care systems.

The next time you have a hungering for fast food, stop by a Wendy's restaurant and notice the signs, posters and food packaging, which promotes the adoption of children nationwide through its foundation. — www.afa.net.

Blessed Fourth of July

How are we as Christians and Americans supposed to celebrate the Fourth of July? John Adams, one of the Founding Fathers of our country, wrote this about how to celebrate the fourth of July: “It ought to be commemorated as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with shews, games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and illuminations from one End of this Continent to the

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Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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Rochester, MN 55901
Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

Contact Information:

253-302-9845 (Mobile)
507-206-3048 (Home)
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SAVE THE DATES!

Emmanuel Potluck Picnic

Sunday, August 4 @ Vomhof's

Thanksgiving Eve Worship & Pie Social

November 27 at Madonna Towers (6pm)

—“Blessed Fourth of July” ... Continued from page three....

other from this Time forward forever more.” The most famous part of the Declaration of Independence explicitly points to God as the source of our freedom: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Not our parents, or politicians, or government, is the source of our most important rights. Only God. As the source of our rights, God deserves the highest praise, honor, and glory on Independence Day (and every day).

George Washington, our first President, wrote this prayer:

“Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly beseech you that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, & from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds & tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice & peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness & in the day of trouble, do not allow our trust in you to fall; all this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.” AMEN!

Back Page Stories

Men’s Morning Bible Study: The men of Emmanuel Lutheran meet on Tuesday mornings (8am) at Oasis Church for Bible Study & fellowship. The men are currently studying the Psalms appointed for weekly worship. Join us each week for conversation and coffee!

Madonna Towers Ministry: Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel twice a month on Wednesdays in 2019. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this wonderful ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, July 3 & 17 at 1:00pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

Women’s Bible Study: The Women completed their study on the Book of Esther on June 6. They will begin a new Bible Study in the fall. It was suggested that we study the Prophet Isaiah in the fall.

Church Council Highlights:
June 10, 2019: Budget Income for May was: \$7,728. Expenses for the month were: \$6,462. An IRS issue is currently being addressed by our Church Treasurer. Worship pianists are scheduled through the end of September. Two Thrivent Action Team grants have been approved; one for the Byron Parade and one for Advertising Emmanuel (T-Shirts and Yard Signs). Vomhof’s will once again be hosting our Emmanuel Potluck Picnic on Sunday, August 4.

Arrive at 11:30am and eat at Noon. Bring a dish to share. Beverages and meat will be provided. New Church Membership Picture Directory will be done this fall. Next Council Meeting will be on Monday, July 15 at 10am.

2019 Regional Conference—
Lutherans for Life: Trinity Lutheran Church of Rochester, MN is hosting this year’s Lutherans for Life regional conference in our area. The Date is Saturday, Sept. 14. The Theme of this year’s conference is: “*Did God Really Say...?*” Cost is \$50.00 per person.

Ladies Get-Together: Women of Emmanuel are invited to attend a social gathering at Julie Steffenson’s home on Tuesday, July 16 at 10am. Coffee & conversation will be enjoyed. Treats will be served. The more the merrier.