

The Emmanuel Epistle

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: “The Future is Now!”

When I fly, I like to read a book. Recently, while flying out to Connecticut for my granddaughter’s first communion, I read John Ortberg’s book, Eternity Is Now In Session. Being linear people, we often think in chronological and sequential categories—“yesterday, today and tomorrow,” and “past, present, and future.” But in Christ, the END TIMES have entered the present times. Kairos (opportune time) has invaded Chronos (chronological time). Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. One thousand years is but a day to the Lord. God measures time differently than we do.

What do we do with eternity & eternal life? Is eternity something that is promised in the past or present, and delivered in the future? Or is eternity a God-given, ALWAYS, present reality? The Book of Ecclesiastes says, “God has set eternity in the human heart.” In Christ, eternity is now in session. In Christ, the future is here and now. Eternal life is “primarily qualitative rather than quantitative.” Eternal life is “the kind of life one has only in Christ”.



A child asks, “Are we *there* yet?” In Christ, we rightly reply, “*There* has come *here*.” In Christ, eternal life has slipped into our temporal world. In this sense, the journey is the destination, and our destination is our journey. We are not consumers of Christ’s merit, but rather disciples of Jesus’ Way!

“I am thoroughly convinced that God will let everyone into heaven who, in his considered opinion, can stand it.”

— Dallas Willard

How does Jesus define eternal life? In the Gospel of John, during his Farewell Discourse & High Priestly Prayer, Jesus prays to the Father, “This is eternal life that they may *know* you, the only true God, & Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” John Ortberg writes, “God is not waiting for eternity to begin. God lives in it right now. It is the interactive fellowship and

joy that exists between Father, Son & Holy Spirit. Eternity is rolling right along, and we are invited to be a part of it—*now*.” It is one thing to *know about* God and quite another thing to actually *know* God. John Ortberg asks a poignant question: “What if salvation isn’t mostly about getting us into heaven, but about getting heaven into us?”

In our linear fashion, we tend to think of heaven as “*up there*” and hell as “*down there*”. We assume that hard work and correct beliefs will get us “*up there*” and not “*down there*”. But in Truth, heaven is the presence of Jesus & hell is the absence of Jesus. In Truth, “*up there*” is coming “*down here*”. Ortberg writes, “The Good News happens through Jesus. Jesus himself—through his incarnation—is literally ‘up there’ coming ‘down here’.” Hence we are in Christ “being saved”.

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June 2019
Newsletter
Volume 7
Issue 6

Food For Thought:

“A heaven for mosquitoes and a hell for men could very conveniently be combined.”

— C.S. Lewis

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Schools Out for Summer?

Saturday school and G.I.F.T. have ended until fall. Save the Date: Rally Day will be on Sept. 14. Thanks is offered to all who led and attended the Christian Education opportunities this past year. Individuals interested in leading or helping with Christian Education in the fall are encouraged to visit with Pastor Dave & Julie Steffenson.

7th Annual Mega Kid's Camp

167+ kids are already registered for summer camp. Several adults from Emmanuel are also signed up to be helpers. Dates: Monday, July 29th - Thursday, August 1st, from 8:45am-Noon each day. **Early Registration cost**: Only \$30 per child until June 15. Visit: www.evangelum.org.

New Life! New Location

THEY'VE MOVED! New Life has expanded & relocated their Rochester pregnancy center to a

building near the fairgrounds in S.E. Rochester which will allow them to grow their capacity to serve more clients in a space better suited for the comprehensive services that New Life provides. A **Grand Opening celebration** will be held June 15th, 2019 from 11AM - 2PM at 40 16th Street SE, Rochester, MN 55904. There will be center tours, balloons, food, merchandise available, opportunities to learn more about New Life, and meet the staff! Please join New Life as they celebrate what God has done & will continue to do through this Christ-centered ministry.

Pentecost Hymn Sing—June 9

"I will sing praises to my God while I have my being"—Psalm 146:2

Sunday, June 9 at 3pm. Location: Old Stone Church, Millville, MN. Contact Rev. Jack Miller for more information (507-798-2408).

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR JUNE

Saturday, June 1 - Easter VII (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Larry Vomhof

Ushers: Rich Sunde & Matt Serr

Acolyte: Nora Serr

Greeters: LeRoy & Margaret Quam

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Julie Steffenson & Jenna Serr

Saturday, June 8 - Pentecost (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Deb Vomhof

Ushers: Larry & Joe Vomhof Sound: **PENDING**

Acolyte: Elijah Matzke

Greeters: LeRoy & Margaret Quam

PIANIST: Annette Engelmann

Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill

Coffee: Julie Steffenson

Treats: Deb Vomhof

Saturday, June 15 - Holy Trinity (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Darald Bothun

Ushers: LeRoy Quam and **PENDING**

Acolyte: **PENDING**

Greeters: Don & Peg Holtan

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Communion Assistant: Leitha Bothun

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Margaret Quam

Saturday, June 22 - Pentecost II (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Creig Anderson & Brock Edwards

Acolyte: Mason Edwards

Greeters: Lee & Judy Pearce

PIANIST: Annette Engelmann

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Julie Edward

Saturday, June 29 - Pentecost III (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill

Ushers: Bob Mulvihill and **PENDING**

Acolyte: **PENDING**

Greeters: Bob & Vicky Mulvihill

PIANIST: Beth Daede

Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Judy Pearce

NOTE: Julie Steffenson will take care of set up & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Pastor Dave & Julie will be gone on June 29; our pulpit supply pastor will be Rev. Jack Miller.

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St. Paul writes, “The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” Abiding in Christ means daily dying and rising in the waters of confession and forgiveness. Saved from “sin, death and the power of the devil,” we are being saved for the “glory of God!” The word Christian is found only three times in the Bible, but the word disciple is found 269 times. As Dallas Willard writes, “The New Testament is a book about disciples, by disciples, and for disciples.” Eternity is now in session. Discipleship and salvation are inseparable.

Martin Luther commenting on *working out our own salvation*, writes, “Oh, faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, so that it is impossible for it not to be constantly doing what is good. Likewise, faith does not ask if good works are to be done, but before one can ask, faith has already done them and is constantly active. Whoever does not perform such good works is a faithless man.” Salvation means participation in Christ.

If someone asks, “What will heaven be like?” We can confidently reply, “Heaven is and will be all about Jesus. Heaven is and will be out of this world. Heaven is and will be eternal life with God.” Ortberg writes, “Heaven does not contain God. God contains heaven.” By the grace of God, we are being saved and Christ is getting heaven into us. We shall be like Jesus, for we shall see Him as He is. Thus we purify ourselves as He is pure. The future is now and yet to be.

Living with Eternity in My Heart, Pastor Dave



EMMANUEL HUDDLE—June 8

Let’s huddle up and review our game plan! On Saturday, June 8, following evening worship, members & friends of Emmanuel Lutheran Church are invited to gather in the Oasis Fellowship Hall to discuss our mutual ministry. We are half-ways through our 3-year “Building for the Future” plan, and almost half-ways through our 2019 Mission Plan. We’ve got much to celebrate, and discuss. Bring your questions, energy, passion for Jesus, and hot ideas!

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

2019 NALC Convocation—August 8-9

This summer, Pastor Dave & Julie, along with Deb & Larry Vomhof, will be attending the annual NALC Convocation in Indianapolis. An added highlight and feature this year will be the election of a new presiding bishop. The NALC in its infancy years has been served well by two very gifted and faithful bishops, Pastor Paull Spring & Pastor John Bradosky. Presently, 12 pastors of the NALC have been nominated for the office of bishop. Each has submitted a bio along with answers to several questions (see www.thenalc.org). Prayerfully read the submitted bios. Deb Vomhof & Pastor Dave will serve as our Emmanuel voting delegates this summer. Your prayers & input are welcomed as the NALC discerns and calls into service our new presiding bishop. May God’s will be done!

FLAG DAY—June 14

Convinced that the words “*Under God*,” from Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, were words that distinguished America from other nations, and needed to be added to our Pledge of Allegiance, President Eisenhower signed a bill into law, on June 14, 1954, saying, “From this day forward, the millions of our school children will daily proclaim ... the dedication of our nation & our people to the Almighty.... In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America’s heritage and future....” In God We Trust!

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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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)

Lutherans for Life—Sanctity of Life!



“God became an embryo to declare embryos precious. Our Lord experienced gestation to hallow the womb as His canvas. He received

parents to especially bless procreation and childrearing. He suffered to sanctify all of our afflictions, including the untreatable ones. Jesus came to claim even the tiniest of our species & make His family out of the neediest human beings (Galatians 4:4-7). We get to call God ‘Father’ and become brothers & sisters to any and all human beings.”

Celebrating the Feast of Pentecost: Saturday, June 8

The Pentecost story that we celebrate as the birth of the early church was a dramatic, wind-rushing, flame-throwing conversion experience (Acts 2:1-4). Things changed with the arrival of the Holy Spirit. The disciples changed from fearful men to courageous ambassadors as their tongues flowed with the fluency of Good News. Those who heard the proclaimed Word were cut to heart & christened into the salvation story of Jesus. May Pentecost convert and change us this year.

May our bones be turned loose and set dancing. May we devote ourselves to the apostles’ teachings & share all things in common. Wear red! Light a candle. Sing Happy Birthday!

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 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, June 5 & 19 at 1:00pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this ministry.

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!

Women’s Bible Study: The Women will complete their study on the Book of Esther on June 6. They will begin a new Bible Study in the fall. Suggestions for topics of study are welcomed.

Church Council Highlights:

May 10, 2019: Budget Income for April was: \$8,940; plus \$1,537 in Designated Gifts. Expenses for the month were: \$14,176. Giving Statements for the months of Jan.—April have been distributed. There will be an Emmanuel Huddle on Saturday night, June 8, following worship. Rev. Jack Miller will serve as Pulpit Supply on June 29 while Pastor Dave is on vacation. Registrations, airfare and hotel rooms for the NALC Convocation have been secured for

Pastor Dave & Julie, and Larry and Deb Vomhof. The 2019 Membership Covenant of Gloria Wiebusch has been approved. Jenna Serr and Julie Edwards will coordinate the Emmanuel Float in the Byron Parade on Sunday, July 21. The Church Council is continuing to work on the following projects: Videotaping our Services, sandwich board signs, updating our website, and a new church picture directory. The next Council Meeting will be on Monday, June 10 at 10am.

National Night Out: This year’s neighborhood celebration event will be held on Tuesday, 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!