

THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship - “I AM HEALED”

*“Healer of our every ill,
light of each tomorrow,
give us peace beyond our
fear, and hope beyond our
sorrow.”*



Recently, I attended a pastors’ meeting in La Crosse, WI. Our topic for the day was “Healing”. Do we believe in healing? Have you participated in a healing service? Are miracles of healing an occurrence of the Biblical past, or do they still happen, by faith? On the one hand we dare not quench the Spirit & deny the power of God. On the other hand healing is not something we can manipulate or produce by taking the right steps or reciting the correct incantations.

My mother battled cancer two times in her life and survived both bouts. Later in life, a blood clot settled in her lungs & she developed acute respiratory distress syndrome. She was on a ventilator for two weeks. Defying all odds, she came back to us. The ventilator was removed on a Sunday morning. It was a miracle. We tasted the gift of the resurrection. My mother aspirated later that night. We shared the Lord’s Supper with her and said

our goodbyes. We surrendered her to the Lord. Was my mother healed or not?

Gordy was my youth director when I was in high school. As a young man, married with two small children, Gordy was diagnosed with terminal cancer. A large inoperable mass resided in his chest. We prayed for Gordy & guess what happened? When Gordy went back to Mayo, they X-rayed him, and the tumor was gone. The doctors couldn’t explain it. Was Gordy healed?

“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up...” (James 5:14, 15)

According to St. Paul,

gifts of healing are one of many manifestations of the Holy Spirit. There are varieties of gifts and the Spirit apportions them to each one as He wills. Healing is one of God’s gifts.

The Men’s Bible Study was interrupted recently by a woman who said, “I need to testify to the Lord’s goodness. My son has been waiting for more than two years to get a heart transplant. He’s 44. I’ve been praying that the Lord would give me patience. Last Thursday a heart became available. My son received the new heart on Friday. Please offer prayers of thanksgiving & praise to God!”

The woman’s son was healed, but the gift required a sacrifice. Our healing also requires a sacrifice. St. Peter writes, “Jesus Himself, bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds we are healed.”

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**March 2016
Newsletter
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Food For Thought:

*“How sweet the name of
Jesus sounds, In a
believer’s ear! It soothes
his sorrows, heals his
wounds, And drives
away his fear.”*

— John Newton

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PRAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS

Each month, on the 15th day of the month, we pray for an area school. During the month of March we are praying for Gibbs Elementary School and delivering goodies as an expression of our love & gratitude. Thanks for keeping students and their families, teachers and administrators, in your prayers! This ministry is supported by an Action Team gift from Thrivent.

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.

Movie: “Risen”

Experience the Resurrection through the eyes of an unbeliever. “Eager to quash rumors of Jesus' resurrection, the Roman senate appoints powerful Tribune Clavius (Joseph Fiennes) to investigate. His life is soon turned on its head as he is confronted with questions of who Jesus really was and why the Roman Empire fears Him.”

"Not since The Passion of the Christ has a 'faith-based' film been so well done in every respect."
- Eric Metaxas

X = Kiss

Letters and cards are often signed with X's and O's indicating kisses and hugs; signs of affection. Since the 16th Century, Christmas has been abbreviated as X-Mas. The X is the Greek letter Chi; the CH in the title Christ. The X reminds us that Jesus was crucified on a cross to bring redemption to God's people. In baptism, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the Cross of Christ forever. During the Middle Ages, when few people were able to write, many documents were signed with an X. Signers kissed the letter to affirm their sincerity in the same way they kissed the Bible when taking an oath. The letter X wasn't selected at random. It was the sign of St. Andrew, who was crucified on an X-shaped cross. The X implied a sacred promise to fulfill one's obligation in the saint's name.

SEMAC 2016

Welcome back members of the SEMAC Servant Team. Thanks for honoring Jesus by serving your neighbors in the Brookport-Unionville, Illinois area. Emmanuel participants included, Larry & Deb Vomhof, Joe Vomhof, and Judy Caudill. SEMAC stands for *South East Minnesota Area Christians*.

SATURDAY SCHOOL

Julie Steffenson is teaching our children engaging Bible Stories each week; usually corresponding with our Scripture Readings for evening Worship. MarJean Damerval is leading the children in singing. During the 5 Saturdays in Lent, children learned about the Apostles' Creed: “I Believe”. Class continues to meet each week at 5:10 p.m. in the Oasis Fellowship Hall. A special unit on the Lord's Prayer will also be taught in 2016. Thanks for making Children & Christian Education a priority in your family life. **No Saturday School on Holy Saturday (Easter Eve), March 26.**

Women's Afternoon Bible Study

Our Small Group Ladies Bible Study reconvenes on Wednesday, March 30 at 1pm at Oasis Church. Last Fall we looked at Fascinating Women of the Old Testament. This spring we will engage in an Eight-Week Study looking at Fascinating Women of the Word in the New Testament. Class dates & Women are:

March 30 - Elizabeth & Anna

April 13 - The Virgin Mary

April 27 - Martha & Mary

May 11 - Mary Magdalene

May 25 - Outcasts & Untouchables

June 1 - Dorcas & Lydia

June 15 - Phoebe, Priscilla & Philip's Daughters

June 29 - Lois & Eunice

Daily Devotions are now available on the NALC website. Visit: www.thenalc.org.

... Continued from page 1—Pastor's Keyboard ...

The Great Physician saves us by dying for us. “Your sins are forgiven for Jesus’s sake!”

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus the preacher (5-7) becomes Jesus the Practitioner (8-9). The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us full of grace and truth. “Lord if you will,” becomes “I will.” “Lord I believe, help my unbelief.” Four friends carried a paralyzed friend to Jesus. They cut a hole in the roof & lowered the pallet down to Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith (the faith of the friends), he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” Some of the religious leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy. “Who does He think He is? God? Only God can forgive sins.” Jesus offered this response, “Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your bed and walk?’”

Jesus reminds us that physical healing is easy compared to the absolution of sins. Forgiveness requires a cross, a sacrifice. Years ago, a doctor friend of mine said, “Do you know the difference is between a doctor and God? God doesn’t think that He’s a doctor.” A woman, a gifted violinist, was healed of a terrible disease. She thought her career as a musician was over. But friends prayed for her and she was miraculously healed. She went to her pastor and said, “I would like to share a gift of music this Sunday as an offering of praise to God. I want everyone to know that God has healed me.” The pastor said, “They won’t believe you. People here don’t believe in miracles of healing.”

A pastor told me that his father was on a tour to the Holy Lands years ago. The church group was standing on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. They saw a blind man. The pastor’s father believes in healing. So he and the others walked up to the blind man and laid hands on him. They prayed over him asking Jesus to heal him. Guess what happened. The blind man received his sight. Joni Eareckson Tada was paralyzed in a swimming accident just after she graduated from high school. She has lived with paralysis and breast cancer. She has prayed for healing. John 14 gave her a new insight on suffering. She writes, “What if my paralysis was part of God’s strategy to further His gospel; to save people. Just as Christ suffered yet trusted the Father, I am to follow in His steps on the road marked with suffering and trust my heavenly Father, even with quadriplegia.”

Do you believe in healing? Have you participated in a healing service? “I Am” healed in worship whenever absolution is given and the Lord’s Supper is celebrated. The death & resurrection of Jesus heals us!

I AM Healed, and so are you! - Pastor Dave

Sermon by Martin Luther

“It is the duty both of preachers & of hearers first of all and above all things to see to it that they have a clear and sure evidence that their doctrine is really the true word of God, revealed from heaven to the holy, original fathers, the prophets & apostles, & confirmed and commanded to be taught by Christ Himself. For we should by no means ever let doctrine be manhandled according to the pleasure & fancy of the individual who adapts it to human reason and understanding. Nor should we let men toy with Scripture, juggle the Word of God, and make it submit to being explained, twisted, stretched, & revised to suit people or to achieve peace and union; for then there could be no secure or stable foundation on which consciences might rely.”

Madonna Towers Ministry Opportunity

Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel on the first Wednesday of each month. Emmanuel members are invited and encouraged to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. The second Service was held on February 3. Special thanks to Sharon & Emma Matzke, & Julie Steffenson for offering your presence & your gifts at this Service. Our next Service will be on Wednesday, March 2 at 1:30pm. [Give Lee Pearce a call](#) if you would like to participate in this wonderful ministry.

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

Worship Servants for March

Saturday, March 5 - Lent IV (6pm)

Scripture Reader, Prayers, and Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof

Ushers: Larry Vomhof & Ava Siebenaler Acolyte: Elijah Matzke

Treats: Deb Vomhof

Tuesday, March 8 - Midweek Lenten Service: "Faith Practices" (6pm) - Soup Supper at 5pm

Assisting Minister: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Matt Serr & Nora

Acolyte: Cabe Siebenaler

Saturday, March 12 - Lent V (6pm)

Scripture Reader, Prayers, and Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill

Ushers: Larry & Joe Vomhof Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Treats: Judy Caudill

Tuesday, March 15 - Midweek Lenten Service: "Faith Practices" (6pm) - Soup Supper at 5pm

Assisting Minister: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Matt Serr & Nora

Acolyte: Cabe Siebenaler

Saturday, March 19 - Eve of Palm & Passion Sunday (6pm)

Scripture Reader, Prayers, and Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Ushers: Jim Siebenaler and Addison Acolyte: Emma Matzke

Treats: Jean Wanek

Thursday, March 24 - Maundy Thursday Holy Communion & Foot Washing (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Jenna Serr Communion Assistant: Katie Siebenaler

Ushers: Rich Sunde & LeRoy Quam Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Friday, March 25 - Good Friday Worship at 12:00 Noon

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Don Holtan

Ushers: LeRoy Quam

Saturday, March 26 - Eve of Easter: Celebration of our Lord's Resurrection! (6pm)

Scripture Reader, Prayers, and Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Rich Sunde & LeRoy Quam Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Treats: Katie Siebenaler

NOTE: Pastor Steffenson will be our worship leader and preacher each week. MarJean Damerval will be our pianist each week. Julie Steffenson will take care of set up each week. Janet Sunde and friends will take care of the take down each week. Don Holtan will be our sound technician each week (except March 19—Lee Pearce). Peg Holtan will provide the coffee each week (except March 19—Leitha Bothun).

Foot Washing: 6-8 people are invited to be a representative group participating in the foot washing. Those wishing to participate should contact Pastor Steffenson.

LENT & Easter 2016

Each week, homemade soup is being enjoyed followed by Worship with Holden Evening Prayer. Our Lenten Theme this year is: "Faith Practices". Each week during the Season of Lent, a faith practice is being explored. Followers of Jesus "pray daily, live and give generously, read & study Scripture, worship weekly, grow spiritually, share the good news, and serve others". We gather on Tuesday evenings (March 1, 8, & 15) at 6pm. Our Soup Coordinator is Judy Pearce. Palm Fronds will be distributed in honor of Palm & Passion Sunday. Our Maundy Thursday Worship will be a foot washing service with Holy Communion at 6pm. Our Good Friday Service will be at 12:00 Noon with the Bidding Prayer and a reading of the Passion Story. Easter will be celebrated with Worship on Holy Saturday at 6pm. Buried Alleluias will return and the Resurrection of our Lord will be celebrated.

Public Reading of the New Testament

Have you ever read the entire Bible? Martin Luther read the Bible from cover to cover at least two times every year. In the 1500's, he translated the Bible into the common language of the people. He sang all 150 psalms each month during the hours of prayer. Luther had most of the Bible committed to memory.

Two years ago, during the Fifty Days of Easter, Emmanuel Members collectively read the entire New Testament. In celebration of the Resurrection and God's great gift of Scripture, Emmanuel Lutheran will host a public reading of the New Testament this year. It is estimated that reading the entire Bible takes about 72 hours (56 hours for the Old Testament and 16 hours for the New Testament).

The Public Reading of the New Testament will take place on **Monday, March 28 from 6am - 10pm at Oasis Church**. If you would like to participate in the public reading of God's Word, serving as a Scripture Reader, please contact Pastor Dave Steffenson. Feel free to drop by Oasis Church for a portion of the day. Bring your Bible and pack a lunch and a thermos, if you wish. We'll have snacks and beverages to coincide with Bathroom Breaks.

One day, 16 hours. An amazing way to celebrate

Easter and hear the Good News spoken out loud. Join us for a portion of the day, or the entire day!

NEW TESTAMENT: Books – number of chapters – Reading Time

1. Matthew - 28 - 1hr. 56min.
2. Mark - 16 - 1hr. 16min.
3. Luke - 24 - 2hrs. 18min.
4. John - 21 - 1hr. 44min.
5. Acts - 28 - 2hrs. 10min.
6. Romans - 16 - 47min.
7. I Corinthians - 16 - 41min.
8. II Corinthians - 13 - 35min.
9. Galatians - 6 - 20min.
10. Ephesians - 6 - 17min.
11. Philippians - 4 - 10min.
12. Colossians - 4 - 10min.
13. I Thessalonians - 5 - 9min.
14. II Thessalonians - 3 - 6min.
15. I Timothy - 6 - 14min.
16. II Timothy - 4 - 11min.
17. Titus - 3 - 6min.
18. Philemon - 1 - 1min.
19. Hebrews - 13 - 45min.
20. James - 5 - 13min.
21. I Peter - 5 - 17min.
22. II Peter - 3 - 10min.
23. I John - 5 - 11min.
24. II John - 1 - 1min.
25. III John - 1 - 1min.
26. Jude - 1 - 4min.
27. Revelation - 22 - 1hr. 3min.

Total New Testament: 15 hours & 56 minutes

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Daylight Savings Time Begins—March 13
- St. Patrick's Day—March 17
- Palm Sunday - First Day of Spring—March 20
- Maundy Thursday—March 24
- Good Friday—March 25
- Holy Saturday - Easter Eve—March 26
- EASTER Sunday—March 27

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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SAVE THE DATE!

EASTER With Emmanuel!

*Join us for the celebration of our
Lord's resurrection on the Eve of
Easter, Saturday, March 26 at
6:00 p.m.*

I Know Which Cell I Want to Be In!

Beware of Terrorist Groups in Church! Latest news reports are that five terrorist cell groups have been operating in many of our churches. They have been identified as Bin Sleepin, Bin Arguin, Bin Fightin, Bin Complainin, and Bin Missin. Their leader, Lucifer Bin Workin trained these groups to destroy local churches. Their plan is to come into the church disguised as Christians & to work within the church to discourage, disrupt, and destroy. However there have been reports of a sixth group. A tiny cell known by the name Bin Prayin is actually the only effective counter terrorism force in the church. Unlike the terrorist cells, the Bin Prayin team does not blend in with whoever and whatever comes along. Bin Prayin does whatever is needed to uplift and encourage the Body of Christ. We have noticed that the Bin Prayin cell group has different characteristics than the others. They have Bin Watchin, Bin Waitin, Bin Fastin, and Bin Longin for their Master Jesus Christ to return. NO CHURCH IS EXEMPT. However you can spot them if you've Bin Lookin' and Bin Goin'!

Back Page Stories

Men's Bible Study Breakfast:

Weekly fellowship around God's Word at 8am Tuesdays at Charlie's (1408 2nd. St. SW). Join us in being Evangelical. Invite a friend.

Supermarket Saturday: The next Channel One opportunity is March 19, 2016 (9 am—Noon).

Women's Bible Studies: The Afternoon Study Group begins a new study - "Fascinating Women of the New Testament" - on Wednesday, March 30 at 1pm. The Evening Study Group is also studying Women of the Word. They will continue to meet monthly at the home of Katie Siebenaler. Session Five will be on Thursday, March 17 at 6:30pm.

Grace-Filled Marriage: "Studies show that 10% of all marriages are truly happy. The missing ingredient in most marriages is not love, but grace!" Interested in investing in your marriage? A new eight week DVD and Book series begins on Sunday night, (6:00-7:30pm) March 6 at Calvary Evangelical Free Church. This group is facilitated by marriage and family counselors, Dr. Steve Lansing & Ann Lansing, RN. Whether your marriage is just beginning, seems healthy, or is struggling on life support, a deeper understanding of grace will help it not just survive, but thrive. Child Care is available. Questions? More information? Call #507-292-1397.

Council Highlights (Feb. 26): Welcome Katie and Judy to the

Church Council! Our 2016 Church Council was installed on Saturday, February 20. Income for the month of January was: \$8,875. Expenses for the month were: \$8,309. Emmanuel has received \$135 from Thrivent Choice Dollars in the first two months of the year. Half of our 2016 NALC & NLS Benevolences have been paid. Members will be given the opportunity for electronic giving if they desire. Pastor Dave & MarJean will participate in automatic electronic payroll. Our Insurance coverage is being evaluated, with coverage for "Religious Expression" being added. Save the Date: Men's Banquet on Friday, November 4. Lee and Pastor will both be attending the NALC Convocation in Anaheim, CA — Aug. 10-12. Next Council Meeting: Wednesday, March 9 at 6pm.