

THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship - Push ‘Undo’”

You’ve no doubt heard the phrase “What Would Jesus Do?” - WWJD. What about this question? “What would Jesus Undo?”

Have you ever wished you could turn back the clock - wipe the slate clean & start over? Do you remember the television show “Quantum Leap”? Have you seen, “Back to the Future”? Would you like to change the course of history for the better? The desire to start over is reflected in our legal system; e.g. Divorce and Bankruptcy. In Golf, we have the honored tradition of the “Mulligan”.

When it comes to technology, we have options. We can select shortcuts on our computers. If we are drafting an email or writing an article, we can push the “save”, or the “print” key. If we receive unwanted correspondence, we can push the delete key. Make a mistake? Push DELETE!

Sometimes my fingers go faster than my brain. In those instances, I inadvertently push the delete button and everything I have been writing, suddenly disappears into cyberspace. Faced with the prospect of having to re-write what I have deleted, I exercise another option. There is grace for the “finger-jerk response”. There is the “Undo” key. By



pushing the “Undo” key, I self-correct my mistake and restore what I deleted. The Rev. Alan Perkins writes, “My favorite button on the computer is the ‘undo’ button. It’s like a little time machine.

Human beings make mistakes. We do and say things that we regret. And so we try to come up with ways to undo what we’ve done. Sometimes we get a Do-Over. Sometimes we don’t.



A friend of mine recently attended a Palm Sunday Worship Service in the Twin Cities. He told me that the music was great. The Service was a re-doing of the Passion Story. Jesus was hanging on the cross with a thief on each side. One thief railed at him. The other thief defended him. The repentant thief asked

for grace. “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” What did Jesus say to the repentant thief? “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” But in this ELCA Twin Cities congregation the script was re-written: “Today you both will be with me in Paradise.” Oops! *Luke 23:39-43* doesn’t say that everyone is going to be saved. Someone pushed the delete button because they didn’t like what Jesus actually said. They added their own tasty version of the Truth.

Universalism is being preached today in many self-proclaimed Churches. The Gospel is Universal, but not universalism. Only Jesus can forgive sins, lift our burden of guilt, & change and transform us into a new creation. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the ultimate Mulligan. The Gospel is the ultimate Second Chance, the ultimate “Undoing of sin & death. God’s gift of a Do-over.

God is in the restoration business. God deletes our sin, undoing our death!

Christ is Risen Indeed!
Pastor Dave

May 2017
Newsletter
Volume 5
Issue 5

Food For Thought:

“The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are at opposite sides of the same coin.”

— A. W. Tozer

INSIDE AND BACK PAGE NEWS

<i>Potluck & Games</i>	2
<i>Thanks MarJean!</i>	2
<i>Iowa Mission District News</i>	2
CALENDAR DATES	2
<i>Worship Servants for May 2017</i>	3
<i>The Death Clock</i>	3
<i>Usher Training</i>	4
<i>Back Page Stories</i>	4
<i>“Council Highlights”</i>	4

News from the Iowa Mission District, NALC

1. Mission in Christ Lutheran Church worshipped in their new building on April 2. They will be having a dedication of their Church Building on Sunday, June 25 (2:30pm).
2. Faith Lutheran in Monona, Iowa plans to have the shell of their church building up by fall.
3. Eagle Grove, Iowa is getting the “Pork Processing Plant” turned down by Mason City. This will mean 900+ fulltime jobs. What a ministry opportunity for this small community.
4. Waterloo Ridge Lutheran Church is celebrating their 150 Anniversary on Labor Day Weekend.
5. First Lutheran in St. Ansgar will celebrate 150 years of ministry in September 2018.

SATURDAY SCHOOL & G.I.F.T.

Each week children are learning faith stories and acquiring faith stones in Saturday School (5:10pm), while adults are learning what it means to “Grow In Faith Together” (5:10pm). Faith Stones aid us in our exercise of Faith Webbing. Youth will have “Song Time” in Saturday School and sing in worship on May 13 (Mother’s Day Weekend). Thanks to Julie for coordinating Saturday School and Song Time! Saturday School and G.I.F.T. will end on May 20 & resume on September 9. Join us for an end of the year party on Saturday May 20. Root Beer Floats will be served!

POTLUCK & Games—May 21

Join us for an “*end of the school year*” day of celebration. We’ve had a great year of Saturday School and G.I.F.T. On Sunday, May 21, Pastor Dave and Julie are hosting a church potluck in their home. Bring a dish to share. Arrive anytime after 11:30am. We’ll eat at 12:00 Noon. The afternoon will be a time of games and conversation.

EASTER MONDAY—Bible Reading!

23 people participated in this year’s public reading of the entire New Testament. Our youngest reader this year was Nora Serr. Thanks for helping us celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and the gift of God’s Word in our lives (Monday, April 17 from 6 am - Midnight). Next year’s date is tentatively April 2.

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.

CALENDAR DATES!

Saturday, April 29: Worship at 6pm with baptism of Charles August Wagner (born 2/10/17)

Thursday, May 4:

3pm—Church Council Meeting

7:00-8:20pm—Rochester National Day of Prayer; with a Faith Resource Expo before and after the time of prayer. Location: Evangel United Methodist Church (2645 Broadway Ave N, Rochester, MN)

Saturday, May 6: Miracle Prayer Walk (3pm), start at Saint Mary’s Hospital

Saturday, June 3: New Life Family Services are hosting a “Walk & Run for Life”.

Monday-Friday, July 24-28 (5:30-8:00pm): Oasis Vacation Bible School.

Tuesday, August 1 (5-9pm): National Night Out. Emmanuel will host a neighborhood gathering in the Oasis Church parking lot.

Sunday, August 6: 12:00 Noon - Emmanuel Church Picnic at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof.

Tearful Goodbyes—Thanks MarJean!

It is with sadness that we say goodbye to our beloved friend and church musician, MarJean Damerval. MarJean has been with us during our first five years as a mission congregation, faithfully serving as our worship pianist. MarJean’s plate has gotten very full in recent months, and she has found it necessary to resign as our worship pianist. She is also withdrawing her membership at Emmanuel and returning to Christ Lutheran in Byron, so that she can worship with her family. Please keep MarJean in your prayers as she helps to care for her mother, and mother-in-law. May God grant her His presence & His peace as she continues to live to the praise of His glory!

Emmanuel will be filling this ministry opportunity as the Lord provides. Prayers are welcomed. Special thanks to Rev. Scott Schilbe who will be our worship pianist on May 6 & 13; and Karen Salz who will be our worship pianist on May 20 & 27.

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR MAY

Saturday, May 6 - Easter IV (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Larry Vomhof
Ushers: Arne Nelson & Rich Sunde
Acolyte: Emma Matzke

PIANIST: Rev. Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Samia Nelson

Saturday, May 13 - Easter V (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Debbie Vomhof
Ushers: Larry & Debbie Vomhof
Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

PIANIST: Rev. Scott Schilbe

Kid's Choir Sings!

Communion Assistant: Debbie Vomhof
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Debbie Vomhof

Saturday, May 20 - Easter VI (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Sharon Matzke
Ushers: Jim Siebenaler & Addison
Acolyte: Elijah Matzke

PIANIST: Karen Salz

Communion Assistant: Jenna Serr
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Jean Wanek

Saturday, May 27 - Easter II (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce
Ushers: Creig Anderson & PENDING
Acolyte: PENDING

PIANIST: Karen Salz

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 will be our preacher each week.

Musings from a Minister: "The Death Clock"

Pastor Rick Engle, Grace Lutheran - Jacksonville, Florida, sends musings out to his congregation every Friday. Pastor Rick writes, "It's unlikely, but you may have heard of the Death Clock. The Death Clock is a Web site that claims to predict when you will die. After you answer a series of questions, your projected date of death appears along with a digital clock counting down the number of days, hours and seconds you have left to live. Of course, it's all based on current life-expectancy charts, but seeing it on a computer screen with the seconds ticking away on the digital clock, makes it a bit more vivid, a bit more real, and perhaps a bit more scary for some people.

According to the Death Clock, I will live to be 82 years, 7 months and one day old ... taking me to the 13th day of November, 2027. I don't believe it for a moment. The insurance actuaries may use this to compute the risk factors in providing me with insurance coverage, but I'm not buying it! I'm not the least bit convinced. Nor am I scared, frightened or concerned. But I am confident. Somehow I don't think it's necessary to have a computer screen remind me that life is slipping away, second by second. Having recently reached the age of 72, I am well aware of the slippage of time and the consequences of aging.

This past Sunday we celebrated the Resurrection. 'Christ is risen!' we shouted in our celebration. And the response came back: 'He is risen indeed! Alleluia!' Once again we were assured that because Jesus lives, we too shall live. This is our faith. This is our hope. This brings us joy! Not just on Easter ... but EVERY day! God in His wisdom doesn't tell us the day of our death. Nor do we know when Christ will return. The Bible urges us to live for Christ and to be prepared for either event ... whichever comes first. Both are certain, both are definite, both are destined to happen without a doubt. Jesus said, 'Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect ... Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes' [Luke 12:40, 43].

As Christians, we need not panic as we see our time slipping away. Instead, we should live every day for Christ & be prepared to meet Him today, tomorrow, or any day. Are you ready? 'The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms' [I Peter 4:7-10]. Have a great weekend in the Lord ... continuing to celebrate His resurrection ... and the promise of our own ..." — *from April 21 musings*

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.*

The Season of Easter is 50 Days Long! The Ascension of our Lord is on Day 40 - May 25!

A Journey Through Song

Proceeds benefit Sing Out Loud and Cy's Place Pediatric Transplant House. When? Tuesday, May 9 at 7:30 PM at Lourdes Chapel, Assisi Heights. Refresh your spirit and join Bella Voce Young Women's Choir, Bella Fiore, & Bellettes choirs, featuring world-renown lyric soprano Esther Heideman singing an inspiring program of art songs. Tickets are \$25 and may be purchased at www.SingOutLoud.org. Questions? Visit with Judy Pearce.

May is NALC Seminary Emphasis Month

Recently, Emmanuel hosted seminarian John Hoyum as our guest preacher (April 1). God invites us to invest in our future NALC pastors by equipping, encouraging and financially supporting their education and ministry. During the month of May, we invite you to pray for our future "orthodox, confessional, and evangelical pastors", and to make a donation in support of our NALC Seminary.

USHER TRAINING

Larry Vomhof is our new Head Usher at Emmanuel. He is hosting training events for our worship ushers. The ministry of hospitality and safety is vital to the worshiping life of our congregation. Let's not leave it to chance. Ushering is more than just passing out bulletins and collecting the offering. Training will be offered on Saturdays during the month of May (13, 20, 27) at 4pm. Please join Larry for conversation and instruction in ministry excellence, to the praise of God.

Back Page Stories

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.

Women's Bible Studies: The Afternoon Group is studying the Biblical View of Marriage & Family (April 20-June 8) on Thursdays at 1pm at Oasis Church. The Evening Group is studying Revelation monthly at the home of Katie Siebenaler at 6:30pm. Next Session: Wed, May 17.

Supermarket Saturday: The next Channel One ministry opportunity is May 20, 2016 (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 community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, May 10 & 17 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

Church Council Highlights -

April 7: Emmanuel received a \$500 Memorial Gift in loving memory of Trac Erickson (Eagle Grove, IA). A \$250 honorarium was given to John Hoyum (guest seminarian on April 1). Pastor Dave will be having his

wisdom teeth extracted on May 2. The NALC Emmanuel Parochial Report has been submitted. A sympathy card was sent to Waterloo Ridge Lutheran Church - death of Pastor Al Hermeier. Laura Kolden, & Gary & Julie Engel have been approved for membership. Looking at faith enrichment opportunities for our youth. The Next Council Meeting is Wednesday, May 4 at 3pm—location pending.

Baptism of Charles Wagner: We welcomed our newest member into the Emmanuel church family on April 29! Charles August Wagner was born on February 10, 2017 into the loving family of Matthew and Megan Wagner, and Anna & James. Charles' godparents are: Melissa and J.J. Barnett.