

The Emmanuel Epistle

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: The Lord’s Day”

Christ is risen indeed! It’s still Easter. Easter for followers of Christ, baptized into the death & resurrection of Jesus, is not simply a day or a Season (50 days).

Easter, in the name of Jesus, is forever & always; eternal & everlasting. Each Sunday becomes for us a mini-Easter. Each day becomes for us a washing of renewal and regeneration in the Holy Spirit—the drowning of our sinful self with all its evil deeds and desires in daily repentance. Easter is the daily dying and rising of the sinner saint. We are, by grace through faith, practicing resurrection.

On the first day of the week, Jesus rose from the dead. On the first day of the week, Jesus appeared in flesh and blood to his disciples. On the first day of the week, we celebrate Easter and the hope of the resurrection. On the first day of the week, God Almighty poured out His Holy Spirit upon His beloved Church and empowered His people for the holy work of witnessing. Easter people are Pentecost people.

Many Christians refer to Sunday, the first day of the week, as the Lord’s Day. Martin Luther reminds us in



the Small Catechism that Christians are to “remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” What does this mean for us? Luther replies, “We are to fear and love God so that we do not neglect God’s Word or the preaching of it, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.” Sabbath keeping is not primarily about keeping a day, but about keeping the Word that keeps us.

“I constantly repeat that all of our life and work must be guided by God’s Word if they are to be God-pleasing and holy. Where that happens the commandment is in force and is fulfilled.”

— Martin Luther

Is Sunday the new Sabbath? No. Biblically speaking, the Jewish day begins at sunset (6pm). Technically, the Sabbath begins at sunset on

Friday night and ends at sunset on Saturday night. Technically, the first day of the week begins at 6pm on Saturday night and ends at 6pm on Sunday night. According to the Old Testament, Israel kept the Sabbath for two primary reasons: In celebration of creation (Exodus 20:8-11) and in remembrance of deliverance (Deuteronomy 5:12-15). This year, Emmanuel Lutheran celebrated Easter Sunday (April 1) early on the first day of the week; namely, 6pm Saturday night.

Luther reminds us that Christians are not obligated to observe the Sabbath. Luther writes, “Therefore, according to its literal, outward sense, this commandment does not concern us Christians.” We do however observe the holy day(s) because the body needs rest and refreshment, and the soul needs opportunity for public worship. Therefore a day is set aside weekly

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Newsletter
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Food For Thought:

“Oh, what a blessing is Sunday, interposed between the waves of worldly business like the divine path of the Israelites through Jordan! There is nothing in which I would advise you to be more strictly conscientious than in Keeping the Sabbath Day holy.”

— William Wilberforce

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Special Celebrations in May!

The Season of Easter features the Ascension of our Lord on Thursday, May 10 and Pentecost on Sunday, May 20. We celebrate Holy Trinity on May 27, and Mother's Day on May 13. The month of May concludes with Memorial Day Weekend.

Mother's Day is always celebrated on the second Sunday in May. It's not a federal holiday, however it's widely celebrated as a special day to honor all mothers and motherhood. Together, we honor the women who raise us—and all the mothers who sacrifice for their children, be they biological or spiritual offspring.

“A mother is the truest friend we have, when trials heavy and sudden fall upon us; when adversity takes the place of prosperity; when friends desert us; when trouble thickens around us, still will she cling to us, and endeavor by her kind precepts and counsels to dissipate the clouds of darkness, and cause peace to return to our hearts.”

WASHINGTON IRVING, WRITER

Bible Study: “The Great Commissions”

New Study. New Time. New Location. In the Season of Easter, women of Emmanuel are participating in a six session study on “God's Call to Make Known the Gospel”. The location of this study will be at the Bridgemoor Pavilion (Bldg. #5520) of the Homestead Complex (home of Nancy Stanley).

The remaining dates for this study are: Thursdays at 10am on May 10, 17, & 31; and June 7.

Everyone knows the Great Commission, but it isn't the only Commission found in the Bible. All four Gospels, plus Acts and St. Paul, contain God's Call to Make Known the Gospel. Resurrection People want to get the WORD out! Join us. Bring a friend!

Byron Parade—July 22

Interested in being a part of the Emmanuel Parade Team? The Byron Parade will be held on Sunday, July 22 at 3pm. Last year was FUN! This year will be even better! Contact Jenna Serr if you're interested in participating. Arne Nelson has a flatbed trailer for us to use. Karen Peterson will be applying for a Thrivent Action Team grant.

GOT Change?

Do you like change? Do you have change? Have you seen the “Change for Emmanuel” jar for the Building Fund. It is located on the Resource Table in the Gathering Space on Saturday nights. God has a change in store for his beloved Emmanuel. Your loose change will help to fund God's Big Change.

6th Annual Mega Kid's Camp

An amazing camp for kids, including Creative Arts, Horses, Legos, and Adventure Games & Sports will be held in the summer of 2018 (Monday, July 16th - Thursday, July 19th, from 8:45am-Noon each day). This year's theme is “Team Spirit”. Youth will learn how to be great teammates through both sports stories and Bible stories about Jesus and his team of disciples. Kids will discover what it means to put team first. Over 300 kids (Preschool age 4-Grade 6) are expected to participate in this year's “Kids Camp”. **Location:** Century High School. Cost is only \$25.00 per kid, which includes snacks, T-Shirt, & prizes. See Pastor Dave for more information.

Saturday School & G.I.F.T.

The last day of G.I.F.T. and Saturday School classes before summer will be Saturday, May 19th. The kids that meet with Julie Steffenson, as well as the Narnia Class, will enjoy ice cream sundaes & some “end of year” activities. Thank you to all the kids, parents and teachers who have made this time with our children a priority and a great experience! Adults are also finishing up their study on Islam on May 19.

Thanks to is offered to Julie Steffenson, Lee Pearce and Deb Vomhof for sharing their gifts in Christian Education this past year. Save the Date: Rally Day will be Saturday, September 8.

Pastor Dan Berkland, Oasis Church

On Nov. 3, 2017, Pastor Dan was diagnosed with Stage IV Metastatic Melanoma. On Friday, May 18, the Berkland Team will walk in Mayo Clinic's Stay Out of the Sun Event to raise money for Melanoma research. Donations to help support melanoma research at Mayo Clinic are welcomed and encouraged.

Oasis Church Rummage Sale

Sale Dates: May 4th & 5th. Proceeds will support Camp Victory and the Belize Mission.

—Continued from page 1 ... for the hearing & learning of the Word of God!

In the Large Catechism, Luther reminds us that “there should be worship daily”. What does it mean to remember the Sabbath Day “to keep it holy”? Luther writes, “Nothing else than to devote it to holy words, holy works, holy life. ... Indeed, we Christians should make every day a holy day and give ourselves only to holy activities—that is, occupy ourselves daily with God’s Word and carry it in our hearts and on our lips.” Sabbath keeping is all about “the keeping of God’s Word”! The Word of God is what sanctifies a day and makes it holy. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.

Recently, I read a book loaned to me by Dick Stanley. The book is entitled, “Redemption at Hacksaw Ridge” (2016). It is the true story of Desmond Doss, a combat medic who refused to carry a gun in WWII. Desmond Doss, a practicing Seventh-day Adventist, enlisted in the army on April 1, 1945, because he wanted to serve his country. His faith kept him from bearing a weapon. “While others are taking life,” Doss said, “I will be saving life.” Desmond Doss was ridiculed by the men of 77th Infantry Division and called “holy Jesus”. He was referred to as a “conscientious objector”, but he preferred the title “conscientious cooperator”. “I am a noncombatant,” Doss said.

On one terrifying day in May of 1945, in the vicious battle for Okinawa, dozens of Desmond’s former tormentors lay wounded and bleeding atop Hacksaw Ridge (the Maeda Escarpment). Their hope lay in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, lived out in the servant life of Desmond Doss. The assault began with a prayer led by Doss. When the day was over, Doss had rescued 75+ men from the escarpment. A documentary and a movie was made about the life of Desmond Doss. “My story is not about me so much as it is about the God I serve,” said Doss. “When I was on the escarpment, after the first two or three men that I dragged on the ground to the edge, after the first few trips on the ground, I stood up while carrying men, with no attempt to avoid bullets. I figured if God had protected me on the first few, He might protect me for the rest. I just kept praying Lord, help me get one more, until they were all down. In my mind I would be killed up on top, but I was at peace with that if that was God’s will for me.”

Desmond Doss labored as a soldier, and when necessary, he served on the Sabbath, because Jesus also healed on the Sabbath. He carried the Bible with him everywhere he went and read it daily. He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for outstanding gallantry in actual battle. Doss was wounded, contracted tuberculosis, had his left lung removed and died at the age of 87 on March 23, 2006. “Up to his death, this humble, selfless man of great faith credited God with his courage, bravery, valor under fire, and his survival.” Doss remembered the Sabbath Day to keep it holy!

On the first day of the week, we regard God’s Word as holy and gladly hear and learn it. “Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near”—Hebrews 10:24-25.

Esteeming all days alike, Pastor Dave (Romans 14:1-12)

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR MAY—Pastor Dave preaching each week

Saturday, May 5 - Easter VI (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill
Ushers: Bob Mulvihill & LeRoy Quam
Acolyte: Addison Siebenaler

Saturday, May 12 - Easter VII (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Julie Steffenson
Ushers: Bob Harms & Creig Anderson
Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Saturday, May 19 - Pentecost (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Deb Vomhof
Ushers: Joe Vomhof & Cabe Siebenaler
Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler

Saturday, May 26 - Holy Trinity (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce
Ushers: Rich Sunde & Larry Vomhof
Acolyte: Emma Matzke

MOTHER’S DAY

PIANIST: Karen Salz

Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Deb Vomhof

PIANIST: Karen Salz

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

ORGANIST: Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Julie Steffenson

ORGANIST: Scott Schilbe

Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce
Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan
Treats: Samia Nelson

NOTE: Julie Steffenson will take care of set up, & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down.

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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SAVE THE DATES!

*** Emmanuel Church Picnic
Sunday, July 29 at 11:30am**

*** Willow Creek Leadership
Summit at Calvary Evangelical
Free, Rochester (August 9-10)**

Emmanuel Building Fund—Next Steps

THANKS to all who have given a second-mile gift or pledge in support of the Emmanuel Building Fund. We spent the Season of Lent in prayer, and put our prayers into action on Easter Monday. We hoped to double the seed money of \$25,000 on April 2 (Easter Monday), and by the grace of God we exceeded our initial goal. Presently, we have \$66,700 in our Building Fund. By year-end, we plan on reaching our Big Goal of \$100,000. People are asking, “What’s next?” Our next steps are as follows:

1) Retreat for Council Members and their spouses at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof on Sunday, May 6. We will revisit our Emmanuel Roadmap, and seek God’s guidance for the gift or purchase of land, or a building for ministry.

2) Dinners for 6-8 during the months of May and June. Signup sheets will soon be posted in the Gathering Space on Saturday nights. Members are invited to attend a meal where fellowship will be enjoyed and conversation about our building fund, & our future as a church, will be shared. Bring your hot ideas, questions and dreams!

3) Enjoy our Annual Church Picnic on Sunday, July 29 at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof. We will also enjoy an Emmanuel Huddle, where input from the Dinners for 6-8 will be shared with all in attendance.

4) Keep your eyes and ears open to the gifts that God has in store for Emmanuel. Contributions to the Building Fund are always welcome. See, “Got Change?” on page 2.



Back Page Stories

Supermarket Saturday: The next Channel One ministry opportunity is May 19, 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 2018. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, May 2 & 16 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

Church Council Highlights - April 13: March was an excellent month for giving. Income exceeded

expenses by about \$1,452. We are still looking for a permanent worship musician. Karen Salz wishes to play once a month beginning in June. Scott Schilbe is available at least twice a month. Pastor will be at a Continuing Education event during the week of June 11. The Oasis Church Nursery is now divided into 2 sections—Nursery & Prayer Room. First Quarter Giving Statements are being distributed. Mark your calendars: Sunday, May 6—Council and spouses Retreat; Months of May and June—Dinners for 6-8 (watch for signup sheets); & July 29—Church Picnic & Emmanuel Huddle at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof. Graduate recognition quilt will be presented to Kaitlyn Vomhof on May

19. Next Council Meeting: May 6.

Women’s Evening Bible Study Group: “Lady Light” is currently not meeting. Women interested in attending an evening Bible Study can visit with Pastor Dave.

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 Book of Acts and discussing the gift of Witnessing in Daily Life. Join us for conversation, coffee and treats. Invite a friend and double your joy!

Memorial Day Weekend: May 26 -28. This U.S. federal holiday is celebrated on the last Monday of May to honor the men & women who have died while serving in the military.