

# The Emmanuel Epistle

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

## Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: On This ROCK”

“On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.” Jesus spoke many parables. He ends His Sermon on the Mount with the parable of the “Two Builders” (Mt. 7:24-27). The Wise One builds on the ROCK. The Foolish One builds on the sand. Storms come the way of both construction workers, but wisdom is justified by her deeds. The house on the ROCK stands firm.

During the Season of Easter, the women of Emmanuel are studying First Peter. The appointed epistle lesson for each week in Easter is also from First Peter. Some scholars have concluded that First Peter is perhaps a sermon preached to recently baptized Christians, and is based on an Eastertide Liturgy. What does baptism mean for daily living? Read First Peter and see.

St. Peter reminds us that we have been born again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Having been sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, God’s ransomed people are living stones anchored on the ROCK of Christ. Peter quotes Psalm 118: “The STONE that the builders rejected has



become the Cornerstone.” Peter writes, “Baptism now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body, but as an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”—3:21.

*“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, & the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”*  
*Psalm 18:2*

What do we know about Peter, the author of this baptismal sermon? Early Church Tradition says that Peter was crucified upside down, during the reign of Nero (54-68 AD), not feeling worthy of the same manner of death as his Lord.

The Women began their Bible Study on First Peter by discovering information on the backstory of Peter. Peter was married and fished for a living with his

brother Andrew. It was Andrew who introduced him to Jesus. Peter lived in Capernaum, and was called by Jesus into discipleship. Peter walked on water, but sunk when he took his eyes off of Jesus. At times, Peter was courageous & at times Peter was a coward. He promised to stay with Jesus to death, but before the rooster crowed, he denied knowing Jesus three times.

In Matthew 16, Jesus asks his disciples who people say that He is, and who they say that He is? Peter offers a profound statement of faith: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Jesus reminds Peter that “flesh and blood has not revealed this truth to Peter, but rather His Father in heaven.” Then Jesus gives Simon a new name. Jesus calls Simon, PETER, which in Greek means ROCKY, the Aramaic equivalent of Cephas.

Jesus tells Peter that on this ROCK, He will build His  
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May 2020  
Newsletter  
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### Food For Thought:

*“Easter was when Hope in person surprised the whole world by coming forward from the future into the present.”*

—N. T. Wright

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## One Day at a Time, Sweet Jesus!

“The old Satanic foe has sworn to work us woe, with craft and dreadful might, he arms himself to fight; on earth he has no equal.”

One little WORD subdues him! God’s WORD for you during trying times, like COVID-19, is JESUS. Christ is Risen. Christ is Risen Indeed! Alleluia! The LORD of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge. Praise the LORD!

God gives us TODAY and invites us to unwrap the gift and to share His saving love with others!

The Gospel is Advancing, one day at a time. Virtual Worship is not as pleasing as in-person worship, but thanks be to God for technology and the ability to get the WORD out.

**Acts 4:31.** Each day at 4:31pm, Pastor Dave is emailing people prayer concerns and words of hope and encouragement. Send Pastor Dave an email if you have needs or prayer concerns. By the grace of God, we will all grow through this time of trial TOGETHER. God be with you!

## Easter Monday Bible Reading—April 13

It was our sixth annual public reading of the entire New Testament. It was different this year, but it was “fun in the SON with God’s WORD in our hearts.” We had 38+ Scripture Readers, plus dozens more who joined us throughout the day. Julie and Pastor Dave began at 5am, and ended the day at 11:20pm. Julie kept everyone posted throughout the day regarding our progress via Facebook. Some bible readers shared a Zoom experience. Jenna and her girls did live-streaming via Facebook. Jean Wanek and Michelle Paxson bridged time zones (Tacoma & Rochester) & read Galatians at the same time. Pastor Dave read I & II Peter to a dear friend (Tina Williams) by means of a speaker phone. We weren’t able to gather in one place, but we did collectively read the entire New Testament. When in-person worship resumes, we plan on having a Bible Celebration Event. Thanks to Jean Wanek for obtaining a Thrivent Action Team grant in support of our Bible Reading.

Save the Date: Easter Monday, April 5, 2021.

## WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR May 2020 — PENDING as we live with COVID-19

A word of thanks! Emmanuel is grateful for the faithful witness and efforts of our worship team who continue to keep worship going virtually during the time of “sheltering in place;” especially during Holy Week. Hundreds of people across the United States have joined Emmanuel for worship in the past few weeks. Thanks is extended to Julie, Don, MarJean, and Sandra.

**Saturday, May 2—Easter 4:** Good Shepherd Sunday (John 10). Virtual Worship with MarJean Damerval as our worship pianist.

**Saturday, May 9—Easter 5:** Jesus’ Farewell Discourse (John 14). Virtual Worship with MarJean Damerval as our worship pianist. The Choir from Grafton, Iowa, will not be able to be present with us.

**Saturday, May 16—Easter 6:** Jesus’ Farewell Discourse (John 14). MarJean will serve as our worship pianist. We are tentatively planning on offering parking lot Holy Communion, weather permitting.

**Saturday, May 23—Easter 7:** Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer (John 11). Mary Ann Groven will serve as our worship pianist. Worship format is pending.

**Saturday, May 30—Feast of Pentecost:** MarJean will serve as our worship pianist. Worship format is pending.

**Sundays, May 3 & 17:** Pastor Dave will be leading worship and preaching at Trinity Lutheran in St. Charles. Trinity Lutheran is hosting Drive-In Worship (9am at the Whitewater Travel Plaza off of I-90), whereby people remain in their vehicles & participate in Worship by turning on their radios.



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His Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. The ROCK is the confession that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Peter can’t take any credit for his confession, since it is God-given. Jesus gives the Office of the Keys (binding and loosing) to His Church. Then Jesus offers a passion prediction. But Peter doesn’t like what he hears. He chastises Jesus: “God forbid. This shall never happen to you!” Jesus then rebukes Peter and gives him another name, namely, Satan: “Get behind me Satan for your mind is set not on the things of God, but of the things of man.”

One of the Women in the bible study wondered why Jesus gave Simon the new name of Peter (Rocky)? I mentioned that in the Bible, names communicated destiny and purpose. Usually a new name indicates a new beginning. So also, in Baptism, God places His name on us: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is called a christening. To CHRISTEN is to name and place into useful service. From St. Peter we learn the joy of being solid and anchored in Christ who is our ROCK. From St. Peter we learn the sorrow of being rocky—shaky and unstable.

Peter knew his sin and his need for forgiveness only too well. “How often must I forgive?” The Law suggested three times. Peter suggested seven times. Jesus said, “70 X 7”. Peter knew that his sins put Jesus on the cross. Peter knew that talk is cheap. In the Garden of Gethsemane, seeking to protect Jesus, Peter courageously grabs a sword and slices off the right ear of Malchus, the slave of the High Priest. Later that same night, he cowers in the presence of a slave girl who recognizes him as a follower of Jesus. When John’s Gospel comes to a close, Peter, goes back to fishing. Jesus orchestrates a miraculous catch of fish (153) and hosts breakfast on shore for his disciples. Three times Jesus says to Peter, “Do you love me?” The three times corresponds to Peter’s threefold denial. Jesus recommissions Peter: “Shepherd my sheep.” Jesus also prophesies Peter’s death (John 21:18-19).

St. Peter preached a powerful sermon on Pentecost (Acts 2). He also penned these words: “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps” (I Peter 2:21).

ROCKING with Jesus, Pastor Dave

### ***New Life Baby Shower***

Virtual Baby Shower? Suggested gifts:

Diapers, Wipes, Formula (Similac or Enfamil), Convertible car seats, Pack N Play, High Chairs, Bouncy Seats, Umbrella Strollers, High Back Booster Seats, & Potty Chairs. Also: Gift Cards to Amazon, Target, or Walmart; Baby Safety items (baby gates, outlet plugs, etc.); Books (all ages); Receiving blankets, crib sheets, & bedding (no bumpers); and "gently used" clothing for newborn-7T and maternity clothing.

Thanks for keeping *New Life* in your prayers!

### ***Women’s Bible Study***

The Women of Emmanuel are gathering for a short 6 Session Study on *I Peter* during the Season of Easter. I Peter is a baptismal homily celebrating the promise of Easter & the hope of the resurrection. Study Dates: April 23-May 28, on Thursdays at 1pm. *This Study will be done via email & phone. Phone a friend!*

### **Saturday School and G.I.F.T.**

During the month of May, there will be no Saturday School & G.I.F.T.

### **A BIBLE FOR EVERY BELIEVER**

It’s a difficult, dangerous and often illegal task, but front-line workers are risking their lives to get God’s Word into the hands of those who otherwise might never receive it. Digital Bibles are a game-changer in places like Somalia, North Korea, Iran and North Africa, where getting caught with a Bible can be costly. Anyone with a mobile phone can secretly carry an entire digital Bible plus teaching aids, worship songs and other tools for the encouragement and discipleship of believers. And today, you can be the answer to their prayers and give them a Bible of their own! You can help ensure that every Christian in more than 60 nations has his or her own copy of the Bible.

You can help place God’s Word into the hands of our brothers and sisters around the world. Thank you for being part of it! Bibles are only \$6.00 a piece. Visit “The Voice of the Martyrs” at [www.vomusa.org](http://www.vomusa.org).

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### SAVE THE DATES!

### Gift of Grace: 10 year Anniversary

Sunday, June 7 (1-4pm)

## COVID-19 – A light we see at the end of the tunnel? If so, who do we have to thank?

The governor of New York, Andrew Cuomo, recently made the following comments (Easter Monday, April 13): “The number is down because we brought the number down. God did not do that. Faith did not do that. Destiny did not do that. A lot of pain and suffering did that . . . That’s how it works. It’s math. If you don’t continue to do that, you’re going to see that number go back up, & that will be a tragedy if that number goes back up.”

Does Mr. Cuomo, who professes to be a Roman Catholic, have confidence in the presence, providence, provision, & power of God? Evangelist Franklin Graham, who leads the evangelical Samaritan’s Purse humanitarian charity, that since April 1 has operated a field hospital in New York City’s Central Park, wrote on Facebook that “we always must be careful what we take credit for. Yes, we must be cautious and combat the spread, but make no mistake — God can help us. His power is as infinite as His love. Gov. Cuomo, I urge you — don’t dismiss the power of prayer and the ability of God to work in this crisis and in the ones we will face in the future. He is our hope, and we continue to pray for His mercy on our nation.”

Jim Daly, President of Focus on the Family, also responded to Cuomo’s comments: “As a person of faith, I . . . believe God is in the middle of everything—including people’s decisions to self-isolate and abide by the government’s directives. In other words, as a Christian, I believe it’s impossible to de-link God from any aspect of our lives or our world. In these uncertain times, how encouraging it is to be reminded that, as the old song says, ‘He’s got the whole world in His hands.’”

## Back Page Stories

**Madonna Towers Ministry:** Our bi-monthly worship services in the Skilled Care Chapel of Madonna Towers is currently suspended until further notice due to COVID-19. Please keep our dear friends at the Madonna Towers in your prayers.

**Men’s Morning Bible Study:** The men of Emmanuel Lutheran Church are currently meeting via email and studying the Scripture Readings for the upcoming Sunday. Let Pastor Dave know if you would like the study notes emailed to you.

### Church Council Highlights:

**April 3, 2020:** Income for the month of March was \$7,020 and expenses were \$7,363. Emmanuel is filling out paperwork for the “Payroll Protection

Program.” There will be no adjustment in rental payments to Oasis Church during the COVID-19 crisis. Virtual Worship Services are being provided via Facebook. Bible Studies are taking place electronically. Easter Monday Bible Reading will be done as a “pass the baton relay”. Peter Schuller (AB Systems) is working on cost estimates for two different sizes of an Emmanuel Church Building. Paperwork is being submitted for Property Tax Exemption for our church land. Emmanuel Picture Directory is still in progress. The launching of a Sunday morning worship service at The Homestead is on hold. Thrivent grants received may need to be repurposed. Date is still pending for the New Life Baby Shower; perhaps a virtual shower

will be held. An Emmanuel Huddle, scheduled for May 2, will be rescheduled due to the “Stay at Home” order of our Governor. The next Council Meeting will be held on Friday, May 8 at 6pm.

**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, & live and give generously.

### Acts 4:31—The Church Prayed!

"And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the Word of God with boldness."

Thanks for joining us in prayer each day at 4:31pm.