

# THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

## Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship - Holy Lives”

“You shall be holy,” says the LORD, “For I AM holy.” The command is a promise. The Theme of our recent NALC Convocation in California was: “Holy God! Holy Lives!” We don’t make ourselves holy. God’s presence in our lives makes us holy. The Apostle Paul reminds us that we are Temples of the Holy Spirit. God doesn’t reside in us because we are holy. Rather, we are holy because God resides in us. Holiness doesn’t make us right with God. Rather, “right with God” (JUSTIFIED by Grace Alone) we are holy.

In his Bible study on I Peter 1:12-25, the Convocation theme Scripture, Dr. James Nestingen said, “Holiness is not a quality we possess but a relationship in which we live ... the gift of living in a continuing relationship with Jesus.” Quoting C.S. Lewis, a keynote speaker said, “True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.” “Have this mind among yourselves, which is already yours in Christ Jesus.”

Bishop Bradosky reminded us that “holiness is not a set of rules or guidelines. We are called into a relationship with a Holy God, not a holy set of rules. Whenever we preach or practice a holiness of rules, we preach and practice a holiness of works.



Holiness is not a spiritual beauty contest in which we list all the good things we have done or promise to do. Holy in the Hebrew is *hagadosh*. It means to be weird, strange, peculiar, different, set apart for a specific purpose. It is a life that is lived for God’s purposes. It is a life that refuses to be conformed to the rest of the world and is, instead, conformed to Christ.

*“But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and kept me in true faith.”*

- Martin Luther

Holy also means to be cleansed, purified and prepared for a special use. In our connection to Christ we are part of His redeeming love that proclaims His Gospel to the world in word and deed, making disciples of all nations. ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’ Jesus wants us to be with Him and like Him.” He guarantees it!

In the Sacrament of Holy Baptism we are christened; named and set apart for a holy purpose. The Holy Spirit makes us holy. Martin Luther writes, “From the presence of the effect we may assume that the cause is at work.” The Holy Spirit dwells in each believer, not helping us to become holy through our work, but making us holy by His work. Luther also writes, “The more godly a person is, the more they feel the battle.” It is in this daily battle that the Holy Spirit is at work in the act of sanctification. The daily ministry of the Holy Spirit enables the believer to withstand the battle & grow in grace. “The sanctification, once begun, daily increases, (for) the Holy Spirit is continually at work in us, by means of the Word of God, & daily bestowing forgiveness on us, till we reach that life where there is no more forgiveness, all persons there being pure & holy.” Holy God! Holy Lives!

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September 2016  
Newsletter  
Volume 4  
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## *Food For Thought:*

*“The Bible was composed in such a way that as beginners mature, its meaning grows with them.”*

— St. Augustine (354-430),  
Bishop of Hippo

## **INSIDE AND BACK PAGE NEWS**

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## **SAVE THE DATES!**

- Saturday, August 27 (3pm): All Church Potluck Picnic with Oasis & Iglesia Churches.
- Saturday, September 10 (5:10pm): Saturday School Rally Day - **GIFT**.
- Saturday, September 24—Emmanuel Huddle following our Worship Service. We'll discuss our mutual ministry, and prepare for our Five Year Anniversary on February 25, 2017.
- Saturday, October 8: Gary Froiland and the Gideon's (6pm). A Freewill Offering will be received in support of the Gideons.
- Sunday, October 16 (7pm): The GARMS Family Concert—Southern Gospel Music. A Freewill Offering will be received.
- Sunday, October 30 (3pm) Third Annual Reformation Sunday Prayer Walk. Potluck follows at Pastor Dave & Julie's house.
- Friday, November 4: Boy's Night Out Banquet.
- Christmas Worship: Saturday, Dec. 24 (2pm) Christmas Eve Children's Service; and Sunday, Dec. 25 (10am) Christmas Day Service.
- Saturday, February 25, 2017—Emmanuel Lutheran Fifth Anniversary Celebration!

## **PRAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS**

Each month, on the 15th day of the month, we pray for an area school. During the month of September we are praying for John Adams Middle School in Rochester. Thanks for keeping students & their families, teachers & administrators, in your prayers! This ministry is supported by an Action Team gift from Thrivent.

## **WALKER for USE**

Rich and Janet Sunde have a walker that is available for loan to members of Emmanuel. If you are in need of the use of a walker while recuperating from surgery or injury, give the Sunde's a call.

## **“Rock the RED KETTLE” Rochester Salvation Army**

Be a Rock Star this Christmas! Emmanuel Lutheran Church is **sponsoring TWO RED KETTLES** at the Circle Drive N.W. HyVee location on Saturday, November 19 from 9am-5pm. Save the date and plan on participating in this kick-off Bell Ringing Event. Lee Pearce will once again be our Emmanuel Bell Ringing Coordinator. Our Red Kettle Goal in 2015 was 40 hours of bell ringing. We actually logged in 45 hours of bell ringing and raised \$2,367.00; which is \$52.60 per hour. We did it all in the name of Jesus, who is our Emmanuel. Compassion is a command of Christ & service is in the blood of His servants. We serve our Lord as we care for the needs of “the least of these” in our midst. Contact Lee if you wish to volunteer or have questions. Rockin' & Rollin'!

## **THE GARMS FAMILY CONCERT October 16, 2016**

David and Kris Garms, with 6 of their children, are traveling full time throughout the country spreading the love of Jesus. This home-schooled family loves to work as a team, & their joy as a family overflows as they sing and play together to the glory of God. They weave Southern Gospel, gospel bluegrass, and their own unique musical style to create a memorable concert experience. Each song is an adventure as they combine beautiful harmonies and solid instrumentation, utilizing over 20 instruments on stage. Emmanuel Lutheran will be hosting this amazing family & musical performance at Oasis Church on Sunday, October 16. The concert will be held at 7:00 pm and will be followed by a dessert fellowship. **Save the date!** You'll be blessed and encouraged, moved to laughter and tears, and your soul will be directed heavenward by this anointed family. CD's will be available for purchase and a freewill offering will be received in support of the Garms Family Ministry. Special thanks is offered to Larry & Deb Vomhof, who have made this musical opportunity possible.

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

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Years ago, when asked about sanctification, a seminary professor replied, “Am I getting any better? This is what I know: The closer I get to the Light, the more dirt I see.” So it is with us. Grace at work in us makes us hate sin all the more. The Holy Spirit brings about the “obedience of faith”. To be holy is to “work as we were meant to work; created to work; designed to work.” Jesus is truing us up! “When Christ appears, we shall be like Him” (I John 3).

A nugget I received from the NALC Convocation is this: Bishop Bradosky’s wife daily sends a text to her children, offering them inspirational words from Scripture; a holy WORD empowering hope & a holy life. Faith produces holy love. Faith is the work of God; a labor of love in you, for you, & through you! Would you expect any less from a Holy God? Washed in the Blood of the Lamb, we are cleansed and clothed with a promise: “You will be holy because I, the LORD your God, Am holy.” And so we live in the present with a guaranteed promise for the future. Put a penny in your pocket and remember that in Christ Jesus, you are One Sent (1 cent).

Peculiar & Purposed for a Holy Life, Pastor Dave

### **WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR SEPTEMBER - Liturgy: Word & Sacrament**

#### **Saturday, September 3 - Pentecost XVI (6pm) - LABOR DAY WEEKEND**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Larry Vomhof                      Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Ushers: LeRoy Quam & Bob Harms

Acolyte: Pending    Treats: Judy Caudill

#### **Saturday, September 10 - Pentecost XVII (6pm) - RALLY DAY**

Scripture Reader, Prayers & Communion Assistant: Deb Vomhof

Ushers: Larry Vomhof and Cabe Siebenaler

Acolyte: Pending    Treats: Deb Vomhof

#### **Saturday, September 17 - Pentecost XVIII (6pm) - Guest Speaker: Adam Morgan**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Jean Wanek

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Jim Siebenaler & Addison

Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler    Treats: Katie Siebnaler

#### **Saturday, September 24- Pentecost XIX: (6pm)**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Matt Serr

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Darald & Leitha Bothun

Acolyte: Pending    Treats: Leitha Bothun

**NOTE:** MarJean Damerval will be our pianist each week except September 10 when Karen Salz will play. Julie Steffenson will take care of set up & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Peg Holtan will provide the coffee & Don Holtan will be our sound technician each week.

### **Men’s Bible Study & Continental Breakfast - NEW LOCATION: Oasis Church**

We’ve decided to relocate our Men’s Bible Study to Oasis Church beginning on Tuesday, August 30 . A simple Continental Breakfast will be served each Tuesday morning at 8am. Our study will begin at 8:15am & will be finished by 9:15am. Our new study will be the Book of Revelation. Please join us! Invite a friend!

### **Emmanuel T-Shirts for Sale—Early Bird Discount**

Tri-Blend T-Shirts, fitted and soft, will be available for purchase in September. Two colors will be available:

Vintage Red and Vintage Turquoise. The Emmanuel logo will appear on the front side over the heart. Our website will be printed on the backside. Printing will be in “white”, representing the holiness we receive from

Christ, who is our Emmanuel - God With Us! The color “red” will remind us that we are Pentecost People, sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the Cross of Christ forever. The color “greenish-blue” will remind us that in the waters of baptism God is growing us up into the full maturity of Jesus. T-Shirts are being sold at half-price during the month of September. Wear your Emmanuel T-Shirt as a witness for the Gospel.

## Lee Pearce - NALC Convocation Report "Visual Acuity"

"Okay. Now, without squinting, what's the smallest line of letters you can read?" You've undoubtedly heard something similar to that when you visit your Optometrist for your eye exam.

Christians must be on guard against developing problems with our spiritual vision. Proverbs 29:18 says "Where there is no vision, the people perish..."; Clear spiritual vision and focus.

During our 2016 NALC convocation, Bishop John Bradosky compared common physical eye diseases to the spiritual maladies that can attack our spiritual vision. It's frighteningly easy for this to happen in our churches. Things like:

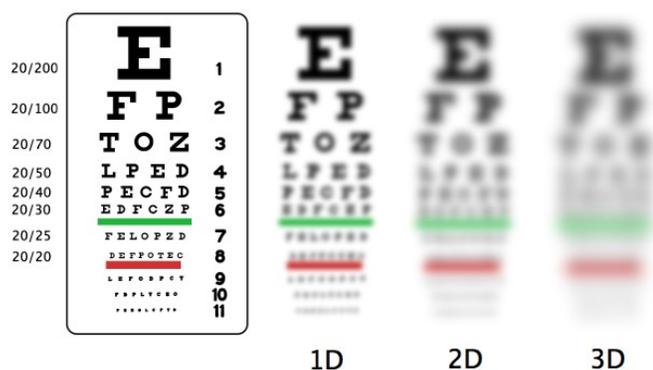
Nearsightedness: Being too caught-up in the things close at hand so that we can't or won't look to the future (complacency);

Farsightedness: We can't see the current reality;

Spiritual Cataracts: Our vision is cloudy. Not enough light is coming-in.

Macular degeneration: The spiritual visual receptors aren't working anymore.

But, maybe the worst of all afflictions: Lazy Eye!



Good, healthy spiritual vision is mandatory. It knows where we've come from, it evaluates the present, and it looks to the future and it plans for success in God's kingdom! Vision anticipates potential roadblocks and develops solutions to them. It's how we make disciples through faith. By grace we have faith and faith inspires works because it wants to, not because

it has to. It's the Holy Spirit at work.

Rev. Dr. Gemechis Buba, the Assistant to the Bishop for Missions, said that faith is made whole in community. It's what holds our spiritual lives and communities together. Dr. Buba said one of the Biblical marks of Christ-centered, mission driven faith is making disciples one at a time. During a Q&A panel session someone asked, "How do we (Lutherans) keep-up with the nondenominational churches?" The answer: "Make Disciples! Don't lose sight of where the mission field is. It's not 'other' churches. The mission field is getting the unchurched to faith in Jesus." Dr. Buba said, "We must enlarge the tent!" We don't need to raid other churches and Christian denominations. We need to focus on the conversion of non-Christians. He said, "My mission in the world is not affirming other faiths. It's proclaiming Jesus as the only source of salvation!"

A recent study showed the fastest growing Christian church is in China; the slowest growing is in the United States. Another study showed all Christian denominations to be declining, with the only demographic increase in "the unchurched" and "other faith" categories. The mission field is white for harvest. Christians are to Proclaim the Gospel of Christ, Praise the Redeemer, and Practice the marks of discipleship. We must build our 'faith webs' in person-to-person ministry & outreach. The message is clear: healthy spiritual vision is imperative to our mission.

During our next Emmanuel Huddle we'll discuss the NALC budget, our fifth anniversary next February, the 2016 Red Kettle campaign, a Safety and Security Ministry, outside lighting, and plans for 2017. Please plan to stay after worship on September 24th. Come with ideas!

### In case you are wondering ...

Total NALC Congregations: 407

Total NALC Baptized Members: 141,000

2016 NALC Budget Forecast: \$200,000 shortfall; similar Budget shortfall budgeted for 2017. Goal of Congregational Benevolence Share: 5-8% (current level is 2-3%; some congregations are giving \$0).

## Channel One: Empty Bowls Fundraiser

Thursday, October 13 from 11:00am - 8:00pm at the Rochester Art Center. Join Channel One Regional Food Bank for this annual celebration of Empty Bowls, an event to help end hunger. Enjoy a simple meal of soup and bread provided by top local restaurants and bakeries. Attendance allows participants to choose donated hand-painted bowls as a take home memento of

the event. Access to all Art Center exhibits and a silent auction will also be included. All proceeds will support Channel One Regional Food Bank's mission - to partner with others to feed people in need. **Pre-sale Tickets:** \$10 for individual and \$30 - family (2 adults and up to 4 children). **Tickets on the day of event:** \$15 for individual and \$35 - family (2 adults and up to 4 children).

## RALLY DAY—Saturday, September 10 at 5:10pm

It's time to rally. It's time to come together in celebration of Christian Education for all ages. This year's offering of classes is called **GIFT - Growing In Faith Together!** Julie Steffenson will once again be coordinating Saturday School for our young people each week in the Oasis Fellowship Hall from 5:10-5:50pm. Weekly lessons will coincide with the Lectionary texts

being used in weekly worship. Topics for September will include: "Lost & Found", "Honesty and Dishonesty", and "The Rich Man & Lazarus". Each Saturday, we will also be providing 30 minutes (5:15-5:45pm) for adults to engage in a faith conversation with each other, which hopefully will extend into the homes; families sharing faith talk (**GIFT**) with each other.

## Women's Bible Studies

*This fall, men and women of Emmanuel will be studying the Book of Revelation. Revelation, not Revelations, is a prophecy of Jesus, not a road map of the END TIMES. The Revelation of Jesus Christ is proclaimed in the setting of Eucharistic Worship to give followers of Christ confident hope in the midst of turbulent times. The THEME of Revelation is: "God Wins!" Two studies will be offered to the Women of Emmanuel and their friends. An afternoon study on Thursdays at 1pm - Oasis Church, beginning on Sept. 8; and an evening study at 6:30pm - Katie's Place, beginning on Wednesday night, September 14. Please join us!*

## Blessing of Backpacks, Students & Teachers - September 3 in Worship

We're starting a new tradition at Emmanuel. We're inviting students & teachers to bring their backpacks to church on Saturday, Sept. 3 for a special blessing.

A backpack blessing at the start of a new school year is meant to engage students & teachers where they are at, in the concrete reality of their lives, and narrate that God is with us everywhere and always. Taking backpacks into church, in the context of the Lord's Supper, suggests that Christianity is a way of life that moves into all spheres of life. Disciples of Jesus are invited to serve God with hearts, souls, minds, and the stuff in our backpacks.

In addition to the blessing, each child/teacher will receive a compass, a sign of God's presence in their

daily life. The blessing given is: "Bless these students & teachers, and their backpacks as they begin another school year. Keep them from danger and from fear. Guide them in the ways of wisdom & truth, and when they are in new places and with new people, help them to remember that you have written their names on the palm of your hand. Let them always know that they are your children in your world. We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Our Worship Service on September 3 will lift up schools, and children & students of all ages, dedicating them to God's glory as we begin a new school year. We hope you can join us as we celebrate Labor Day & the gift of lifelong learning.

## Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

1815—38th Street NW  
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Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

### Contact Information:

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507-206-3048 (Home)  
pastordavesteffenson@gmail.com



### Save the Dates!

*\* Saturday, February 25, 2017  
Emmanuel Lutheran  
Fifth Anniversary Celebration!*

*\* August 7-11, 2017 is the date of  
the NALC Convocation in  
Nashville, Tennessee!*

## IDEA BANK

**AN IDEA:** The NALC seeks to provide tuition free education at its Seminary. The present cost per year per seminarian is \$17,000. Wouldn't it be fun if Emmanuel could pay the tuition for a Seminary Student. Pastor Dave's home congregation in Wisconsin paid for three years of tuition while he attended Luther Seminary from 1979-83.

**AN IDEA:** Each year the city of Rochester celebrates National Night Out on the first Tuesday of the month of August. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, better places to live. Nationally, 38.3 million people participated in National Night Out in 2015.

Wouldn't it be fun for Emmanuel to host a National Night Out at Oasis Church in 2017?

**AN IDEA:** Wouldn't it be fun if Emmanuel Lutheran could ring bells for the Salvation Army for a total number of hours equal to our current membership?

**AN IDEA:** Wouldn't it be fun to sponsor a well for an impoverished community somewhere in the world through Water Mission? Cost is \$35,000. Living H20.

## Back Page Stories

**Men's Bible Study Breakfast:** A new study and a new location: Join us at Oasis Church each Tuesday at 8am for a Bible Study on Revelation and a continental breakfast. Participate in being Evangelical. Invite a friend.

**Supermarket Saturday:** The next Channel One ministry opportunity is September 17, 2016 (9 am—Noon).

**Women's Bible Studies:** The Afternoon & Evening Women's Bible Study groups will be studying the Book of Revelation this fall!

**Madonna Towers Ministry:** Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers

Skilled Care Chapel on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, September 7 & 21 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

**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.

**Church Council Highlights - Aug. 4:** Financial report: YTD shortfall of \$4,401. We budgeted to use \$15,000 of our Reserves in 2016.

The Men's Bible Study Breakfast is relocating to Oasis Church on Aug. 30. Thanks to Deb & Larry Vomhof for hosting our Emmanuel Church Picnic. There will be an Emmanuel Huddle after worship on Saturday, Sept. 24. Save the date for the Garms Family Concert on Sunday, October 16. Boy's Night Out Banquet will be on Friday, Nov. 4. Emmanuel Witness Wear is being ordered. Show your colors! Save the Date: Our Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 29, 2017 in the Oasis Fellowship Hall at 4pm. Safety & Security Procedures are being reviewed. Plans are underway for our Emmanuel 5th Ann. Celebration (Feb. 25, 2017). Next Council Meeting will be held at Pastor Dave's House on Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 5pm.