

The Emmanuel Epistle!

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: Do’s and Don’ts”

There is a new Game Show on television called DON’T, which premiered on June 11. The show features teams of four trying to accomplish various tasks to win up to \$100,000. In each episode, a team of 4 people is invited to participate in 5 games, each worth up to \$20,000 (with an additional \$20,000 available via the use of the Don’t Push Button & \$5,000 available from a side challenge called the Don’t You Dare). Each game’s title is in the format of “Don’t ____”. Games played all have the word “Don’t” preceding them in their name.

Discipleship is not a game where a person plays for monetary gain. Discipleship is a walk, a race, a practice, and a WAY of living and following Jesus. In the Great Commission, Jesus didn’t say, “Go therefore & play some games.” Jesus said, “As you go, make disciples of all people.” Caked in the dust of Rabbi Jesus, we make disciples by being disciples. We learn and teach obedience to the instructions of Christ. There are Do’s and Don’ts in a Christian’s walk of faith.

Why all the Do’s & Don’ts? We might falsely assume



that keeping the rules and obeying God’s statutes somehow gains us God’s approval. We obey God, not to get right with God, as though we can somehow save ourselves or make ourselves holy. We obey God’s “Do’s and Don’ts” because God has saved us and made us holy. Saved people make it their aim to please their Lord & Savior.

Do This! The Great Commandment: “Love the LORD your God with ALL your heart and soul and mind.”

Saved people refuse to sin all the more that grace may abound. Saved people discard the works of the flesh, and are clothed with the fruit of the Spirit. St. Paul writes, “So as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10).

The Ten Commandments

serve a holy purpose. They are given to free people, captive to the love of God. The Ten Commandments begin with a binding promise: “I AM the LORD Your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery!” Salvation is the foundation of God’s “Do’s & Don’ts.”

Psalm 119 reminds us that God has ordered His world and our lives with His WORD (precepts and promises). God’s WORD, like a diamond with 22 facets (22 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet), is a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths. Grace leads to godly living, not vice versa. God’s steadfast love is the source and power of every “Do and Don’t.”

Recently, I read a testimony of a woman who grew up in the church with a faulty understanding of discipleship. Her name is Leah. “For most of Leah Penna’s life, faith was all about what you don’t do. Don’t drink. Don’t smoke.

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**August 2020
Newsletter
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Food For Thought:

“My view of God changed from a distant, uncaring God to a Savior who gave His life for me, a sinner. There was so much more to faith than a ‘do’s and don’ts list.’”

— Leah Penna

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Emmanuel Website! Thank You!

Thanks is offered to Adam Troendle for helping us to advance our Website offerings. Members without Facebook can now log on to our Website and either listen to an audio version of the Worship Service or they can watch the video of the Service posted on Facebook. Adam has also posted the video recordings of Pastor Dave Steffenson's Children's Sermons. You can find these offerings under the heading of SERMONS.

New Life Family Services

"Carry Them through Campaign"

During the month of July, churches sponsored 200 women seeking help and counsel for their unplanned pregnancy. For every \$550 raised, a church carried one woman and her unborn child through birth and beyond. Emmanuel set a goal of saving at least one child. **We received gifts of \$2,200;** funding for 4 mothers and their babies.

Thanks for putting your faith into action & standing in the gap with the least of these.

NALC 2020 Virtual Mission Convocation

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the NALC will be hosting its first ever Virtual Mission Convocation. Voting Delegates and Visitors are invited

to register for this online opportunity to hear from Bishop Dan Selbo on the 2020 Vision, participate in elections and voting, and hear updates from across the NALC.

Dates: Friday, August 7, 6-9 p.m. ET

Saturday, August 8, 2-6 p.m. ET

Cost: \$25 (voting delegates), \$0 (visitors)

It is easier than ever to attend the NALC Mission Convocation. With no need to travel, and minimal registration costs, the NALC is hoping to have more participants than ever before.

Matching Gift—Building Fund

A Supporter of Emmanuel has pledged a matching gift of \$25,000 to our Building Fund. Between now and August 31, every gift given to the Emmanuel Building Fund will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to \$25,000. If you've been thinking of making a gift to the Building Fund, now is the time to double your gift & double your joy. Gifts received so far: \$8,300.00. Thank You!

Tentative WORSHIP PLANS FOR August 2020

Our Liturgy throughout the summer will be the **Lutheran Book of Worship**. We continue to exercise caution and care, compassion & faithfulness as we gather for in-person worship. We will offer the Lord's Supper once each month during the summer (August 1). As Pastor Dave Steffenson continues to undergo chemo treatment for pancreatic cancer throughout the summer, Rev. Tim Duesenberg and Rev. Waldemar Gies are both available, should the need arise, to step in and help with pastoral services.

Emmanuel will continue to offer online worship opportunities via the Emmanuel Facebook page and the Emmanuel Church Website.

Saturday, August 1—Pentecost 9: Holy Communion will be served following worship in the church parking lot. Mary Ann Groven will be our Worship Pianist.

Saturday, August 8—Pentecost 10: MarJean Damerval will be our Worship Pianist.

Saturday, August 15—Pentecost 11: MarJean Damerval will be our Worship Pianist.

Saturday, August 22—Pentecost 12: MarJean Damerval will be our Worship Pianist.

Saturday, August 29—Pentecost 13: Karen Salz will be our Worship Pianist.

Thanks to Don Holtan for recording our Services and to Julie Steffenson & Peg Holtan for their help.

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Don't ask why. "I thought following God was all about following the rules, performing and doing, doing, doing," said Leah. "If you messed up you were out. That's how I remember it. There was absolutely no grace, no community, and there wasn't anyone there to pick me up when I stumbled." Leah grew up in Chicago. She memorized Scripture and attended worship whenever the doors were open. She became more of a rule-follower than a Christ-follower. Consumed by the RULES, Leah and her husband left the church and chose instead a path of self-destruction. God pursued Leah into the Far Country and set her free from her captivity to Satan and sin. She read the Book of Romans & discovered the TRUTH of the Gospel. Leah has a new understanding of discipleship and **God's Do's and Don'ts**. "My view of God changed from a distant, uncaring God to a Savior who gave His life for me, a sinner," said Leah. "There is so much more to faith than a 'do's and don'ts list.' It's about having a real relationship with Christ. Through time spent in God's Word, the Lord became my Living Water." Do's & Don'ts became no longer a duty, but rather a delight in Leah's life.

Bonhoeffer reminds us that salvation is free, but discipleship will cost us our lives. Obedience to the teachings of Jesus is a matter of reverence and love, not legalism, threat of punishment, or promise of reward. Because Jesus is LORD, because our sins are forgiven, because heaven is the home of the saints, because NOTHING can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, and because the Kingdom of Heaven is ours forever ... Therefore we Don't lose heart & we Don't grow weary in well-doing. Filled with the Holy Spirit, we follow Jesus and put into practice His Do's and Don'ts.

Responding to God's DONE with Do's & Don'ts in Daily Life, Pastor Dave

Emmanuel Church Picnic — Blessing of the Church Land

LOCATION: 75th Street NW & 18th Ave. NW Rochester.

DATE: Sunday, August 2, 2020

Arrive between 11:30am and 12:00 Noon. Blessing of God's Land will follow the picnic lunch at 1pm.

- The Grassy Area Will Be Mowed.
- A Large Tent (No Side Flaps) Will Be Provided for Shade and/or Shelter.
- Serving Tables and Dining Tables Will Be Provided.
- A Port-A-Potty Is Available with Toilet Paper & Sanitizing Wipes.
- Masks and Hand Sanitizer Will Be Available.



CATERED MENU:

- Byron's Pulled Barbeque Pork with Hawaiian Buns
- Ballpark Hot Dogs with Ballpark Buns
- Condiments: Heinz Ketchup, Mustard, Sweet Relish & Sweet Baby Ray's Barbeque Sauce
- Captain Ken's Oven Baked Beans; Potato Salad; Bottled Ice Water
- Hostess Desserts: Chocolate Cupcakes, Lemon Cupcakes, Twinkies, Ho-Ho's

(All food will be Served by Sanitized Servers with Gloves and Masks -- NOT SELF-SERVE. We Will Go Through the Serving Line One Family at a Time).

YOU BRING – Lawn Chairs, Canopies, Personal Food and/or Drink, Toothpicks – NO FOOD TO SHARE!

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

3819 - 18th Ave. NW,
Rochester, MN 55901
Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

Contact Information:

253-302-9845 (Mobile)

507-206-3048 (Home)

pastordavesteffenson@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE!

Church Picnic & Blessing of the LORD'S LAND!

Sunday, August 2

Picnic: 11:30am

Blessing: 1:00pm

QUESTIONS? Contact Don Holtan at
dholtan@q.com, or #507-280-8231.

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, and live & give generously.

Men's Bible Study (with Outdoor, In-Person options)

The men of Emmanuel Lutheran Church are currently meeting on Tuesday mornings at 8:30am 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. We will have two **in-person studies** during the month of August: Tentatively, Wednesdays, Aug. 12 and 26 from 11am-12 Noon. Pending Location: Church Land or outside Oasis Church.

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.”

Each day at 4:31pm, and other times as well, Members and Friends of Emmanuel continue to join hands and hearts in prayer, although it be from a distance. Send prayer requests to Pastor Dave Steffenson. Thanks for joining us. “At the name of

Back Page Stories

Church Council Highlights: July 3, 2020—Zoom Meeting: Income for the month of June was \$11,129. Expenses for the month were \$2,276 (offset by PPP funding). Presently our YTD surplus is \$4,516, allowing us to stay current with our Benevolence distribution. Pastor on vacation during the week of July 5-11, with Pastor Gies serving as our pulpit supply. A mid-year financial audit is scheduled for July 25 following worship. Giving Statements for the first six months of 2020 will be distributed. Discussed tour of Zion Lutheran in Dexter, date of land blessing and church picnic, and New Life July Campaign. This year's NALC Convocation will be a Virtual Event due to the COVID-19

pandemic. Dates: August 7-8. Judy Caudill and Debbie Vomhof are our Emmanuel delegates. We are still in need of a storage place for our Baby Grand Piano. Nominating Committee needs to begin its work. New Church Picture Directories have been distributed. The next Church Council Meeting is August 6 @ 3pm.

Women's Bible Studies:

Our study on I Peter concluded on May 28. Women interested in getting together for an outdoor in-person study should contact Pastor Dave.

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.

MANY THANKS!

Pastor Dave and Julie offer thanks to the members and many friends of Emmanuel for all of their kind thoughts, cards, fervent prayers & acts of love during these hard days of living with pancreatic cancer. The LORD reveals His Presence in His people. The Steffenson family is finding their fortitude in the faith of Jesus and His promising WORD. We are confident that God will waste nothing and will use all things for His glory!

Congratulations!

Roman Mulvill, was recently promoted to the rank of Captain in the United States Army. We are so proud of this amazing soldier and servant of God & Country!