

The Emmanuel Epistle!

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: Sentinels one & all!”

“Wake, awake, for night is flying, The watchmen on the heights are crying; Awake, Jerusalem, at last!”

The duty of a sentinel is to keep watch; to stay awake, and not to fall asleep on the job. A sentinel sounds the alarm or blows the trumpet. A sentinel is on guard duty, protecting the city and its residents from an enemy hiding in the shadows of night, preparing to launch a surprise attack.

It’s the Season of Advent. Happy New Year! A new church year begins with an expectation of the END. Advent means “COMING”. We wait and watch for the coming of the Promised Messiah. Jesus came. Jesus comes. Jesus will come again. We should all be ready; waiting and watching for our Lord’s return.

How does one wait well? Jesus offers a parable: “Be dressed ready for service & keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be



good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him” (Luke 12:35–40).

“A prison cell, in which one waits, hopes – and is completely dependent on the fact that the door of freedom has to be opened from the outside, is not a bad picture of Advent”

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer,
God is in the Manger

Disciples are sentinels. We are washed and readied, dressed for service. Our Master is away at a wedding banquet, but he will return. When our Lord returns, what will He find? Will he find us sound asleep, or will he find us

eagerly waiting for the knock on the door. Ironically, when the Master arrives, the watchmen (sentinels and servants) will receive the biggest surprise of their lives. Did you catch it? Did you hear it? Our Master will put on servant clothes and he will prepare a feast for us. We will recline at the table and our Master will serve us! The promised coming of our promising Savior need not surprise us like a thief in the night.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. The Good Shepherd comes to lay down his life for his sheep. The Master Servant washes us clean, gives us a new commandment, and bestows upon us abundant life, now & forevermore.

The Bible refers to watchmen in a spiritual sense. God appointed prophets as spiritual watchmen over the souls of His people: “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me” (Ezekiel 33:7). God commissioned

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**December 2021
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Food For Thought:

“The Lord is coming, always coming. When you have ears to hear and eyes to see, you will recognize him at any moment of your life. Life is Advent; life is recognizing the coming of the Lord.”

– Henri Nouwen

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ADVENT GIFT for You!



This year, each family at Emmanuel will receive a book entitled “**The Littlest Watchman,**” by Scott James. Pick up your free copy on Saturday, November 27 at worship. Daily, during the month of December, Pastor Dave will be sharing a devotion in his 4:31.

Children’s Nativity

Saturday, December 18 @ 6pm

Children of Emmanuel and their friends will participate in the presentation of the Christmas Story on Dec. 18. This year’s theme is “THE Christmas Miracle.” Advent invites us to Wait and Watch for it! God always keeps His promises!

Christmas Keepsake Ornament

Each year, Emmanuel Lutheran Church celebrates the Season of Christmas with a commemorative ornament. This year’s Theme is “The Miracle of Christmas”. Thanks is offered to Lee & Judy Pearce for providing these ornaments. There is one keepsake ornament per household.

Holiday Cookies: Hospitality Houses

Plates of store-bought holiday cookies are being shared with Rochester Hospitality Houses during the Season of Advent! Those wishing to help with the distribution of this Christ-centered love may contact Judy Pearce. A Thrivent Action Team grant was received in support of this ministry.

Emmanuel Huddle: December 4 at 7pm!

Join us following worship on December 4 for conversation regarding our shared ministry. We’ll have a first look at our mission plan budget for 2022, an update on our Building project, and also conversation regarding Ten Goals for our Ten Year Church Anniversary! Emmanuel will turn TEN years old on February 25, 2022! Yay God!

WORSHIP FOR DECEMBER 2021 — 6pm

Emmanuel will continue to offer in-person worship weekly on Saturday nights at 6pm as well as online worship opportunities via the Emmanuel Facebook Page and the Emmanuel Church Website. Thanks for worshipping with us in person and virtually online. We will offer the Lord’s Supper on December 11 (Advent 3), 24 (Christmas Eve) and on January 1 (New Year’s Day) during worship in prefilled cups.

Saturday, November 27 – 6pm: Advent 1 — Pianist: Jane Cabaya (Advent liturgy); Greeters: Lee & Judy Pearce. Distribution of Free Advent Book - “The Littlest Watchman”. Assisting Minister: Kim Starr.

Saturday, December 4 – 6pm: Advent 2 — Pianist: Mary Ann Groven (Advent liturgy); Guest Preacher: Pastor Waldemar Gies; Assisting Minister: Julie Steffenson; Greeters for the month are pending!

Saturday, December 11 – 6pm: Advent 3 — Pianist: Jane Cabaya (Advent liturgy); **Holy Communion;** Assisting Minister: Kim Starr.

Saturday, November 18 – 6pm: Advent 4 — Pianist: Mary Ann Groven (Advent liturgy); Children’s Nativity; Assisting Minister: Kim Starr.

Friday, December 24 – 2pm: Christmas Eve — Pianist: Mary Ann Groven (Christmas Liturgy)

Saturday, December 25 – 6pm: Christmas Day — Pianist: Jane Cabaya (Christmas liturgy).

Saturday, January 1 – 6pm: New Year’s Day — Pianist: Mary Ann Groven (Twelve Days of Christmas Liturgy—Bell Ringing Worship); **Holy Communion.**

Thanks to Don & Peg Holtan, Kim Starr, Julie Steffenson, and all of our weekly servants who assist with worship; recording, ushering, setup, takedown, greeting, etc. Soli Deo Gloria!

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prophets to guard the souls of his saints; to warn them of the perils involved in falling away from the Lord and doing evil. If a prophet warned God’s people of impending danger, and the people refused to repent, then judgment would be their own fault. But if the prophet didn’t warn God’s people to turn from their evil ways, judgment would fall on both the wicked one and the prophet. Obedience is the only course of action for a true watchman: “But if you do warn the wicked person to turn from their ways and they do not do so, they will die for their sin, though you yourself will be saved” (Ezekiel 33:9).

This year, Emmanuel is distributing an Advent book to families with small children. The book is entitled, “**The Littlest Watchman**”. Benjamin is a watchman. Every day he sits and watches an old tree stump, waiting for the day that a shoot will appear. Benjamin knows that day will come because God has promised that it will. “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit” (Isaiah 11:1). The Old Testament is filled with the promising words of God. In the New Testament the fulfillment of promise takes place in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. All Christians are called to be watchmen. Jesus told His disciples, “watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38). Disciples eagerly await the coming of the Son of Man. We are sentinels, staying awake, watching for the signs and sounding the trumpet when the time is right! Blessed Advent to you and yours!

A Watchman on the Heights, Pastor Dave

Implementation Team Update!



Have you visited the church land lately? We invite & encourage you to drive out and see firsthand what God is doing with this beautiful gift He has bestowed upon his beloved Emmanuel Lutheran Church. A beautiful cross, donated by LeRoy and Margaret Quam, has been placed next to the church sign, proclaiming the eternal love of Jesus for sinners in need of salvation. A driveway is

in along with parking for 30 vehicles. An electrical transformer will be installed in the near future and

work on the Shelter will begin as weather permits.

A contract has been signed. The costs are more than the \$90,000 approved last April, but the generosity of members and friends of Emmanuel has allowed us to move forward with this project; a portion of the Shelter will be enclosed. Necessary funding is in hand! Praise the Lord! The concrete floor for the shelter will be poured in the spring.



Emmanuel Nominating Committee

Contact Lee Pearce, Julie Steffenson, Heather Mikesch, or Leitha Bothun if you are looking for ways to serve Christ and His Church. There are many ways to use your gifts for the glory of God.

On the Ballot in January of 2022:

- Council Member: 2-year term: 3 positions (Don Wanek, Jeff Patzke, & Darald Bothun)
- Nominating Committee: 4 needed; 1 year term (Lee Pearce, Leitha Bothun, & 2 more)
- Audit Committee Members: 3 needed; one 3-year term (Jenna Serr), & one 2-year term (Julie Edwards) and one 1-year term (??).
- Lay Voting Members & Alternates for NALC & Mission District Convocations.



“Now Thank We All Our God!”

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

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SAVE THE DATES!

Saturday, January 29—Emmanuel Annual Meeting!

Emmanuel Turns 10: Feb 25th, 2022. Let's Celebrate!

Ladies Bible Study: The women of Emmanuel Lutheran are currently enjoying a Bible study based on the book: Twelve Extraordinary Women by John MacArthur. Each chapter of the book looks at a different woman & their life, struggles and faith. A study guide at the end of the book is guiding the study and conversations. This study meets twice a month at the home of Judy Pearce with Leitha Bothun as the study leader. Upcoming Sessions: Wednesdays, Dec. 1 & 15 at 1:00pm. December 15 will be a potluck Christmas lunch.

Men's Bible Study: The men of Emmanuel Lutheran meet on Tuesday mornings at 8:30am via email & study the Bible Readings for the upcoming weekend. Let Pastor Dave know if you would like the study notes emailed to you. In-person studies will be offered on the following **Wednesdays: Dec. 1 & 8 at 11am.** Location: Oasis Church. Bring a Bible, a friend, & a heart eager to hear God's Word.

I Will Give Thanks!

- Thanks to everyone who sent out greeting cards, provided pie, and supported the Pastor's Discretionary Fund!
 - Thanks to everyone who has already signed a Discipleship Membership Covenant for 2022!
- Thanks to everyone who has secured a Thrivent Action Team grant or has sent Choice Dollars to Emmanuel!
- Thanks to Larry Vomhof & his sons who are coordinating snow removal on Mondays at Oasis Church this winter.

Back Page Stories

Church Council Highlights:

Nov. 4. Budget Income for the month of Oct. was \$14,430; expenses were \$8,537. \$11,657 has been donated/designated to our Building Fund #357 since April to cover additional costs of our upgraded Phase 1 Plan, bringing the total dollars available to \$101,657. Oasis rent has been paid through the end of the year. All of our Benevolences for 2021 have been submitted. Plans are set for our Thanksgiving Eve Worship and pie social; offering will support the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Items are getting resolved & moving forward with our Building Project. SEMAC Mission Trip: Feb. 13-25 in Gibson City, IL. We will need to

budget for music copyright fees in 2022. Pastor will lead worship at Madonna Towers on Nov. 24 & Dec. 22. Next Council Mtg. is Dec. 2 at 1pm (rescheduled to Dec. 3).

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Got Thrivent Products? Don't forget to designate your Choice Dollars. Call #1-800-847-4836 or go online at www.thrivent.org. We've received \$1,572 in Thrivent Choice Dollars.

Acts 4:31—The Church Prayed!

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

MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP!

Faith Practices! Signposts guide our

way: Disciples pray daily, worship weekly, grow spiritually, read & study Scripture on a regular basis, serve others, share the good news, and live & give generously. 33 signed Covenants!

This and That!

- * Congrats to Creig Anderson in his retirement from Mayo on Nov. 23.
- * Thanks for all the prayers during Pastor's recent hospitalization.
- * Monthly educational packets on “Miracles in the Bible” are available for children. Thanks Julie!

Children's Ministry!

Worship Bags are available for kids each week. We hope children enjoy these worship resources. Pastor Dave continues to post **Children's Messages** weekly on our Emmanuel Website & Facebook Page.