

# THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

## Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: Baptism Anyone?”

Baptism anyone? “Grandma wants the baby done!” But here is the irony: When a baby is baptized, they are both done & never done. Sin, death and the devil are finished (kaput), but the wet walk of following Jesus is endless and forever. Game over! Checkmate! God wins and so do you! Daily dying and rising is required! The sinful self with all of its evil deed and desires is drowned through daily repentance. A new self arises to live with God in righteousness and purity forever. Amen!

Baptism anyone? Is anyone & everyone a candidate for baptism? Yes and No! Jesus commissioned His beloved Church to “go and make disciples of all nations, everywhere.” Everyone is a candidate for baptism. St. Peter tells the “cut to the heart” crowd gathered on Pentecost Sunday that they need to repent and be baptized. The promise is to all whom God calls to Himself. The Word is preached and heard. Faith comes from the preaching of Christ. Baptism is for believers, for those who confess that Jesus is LORD. Children of believers are baptized, because they are being raised in Christian homes.

During the Season of Easter, our Epistle readings came from I Peter. St. Peter preaches a baptismal homily



to persecuted and suffering Christians in Asia Minor. St. Peter reminds his hearers that “Baptism Now Saves You.” When Martin Luther was under attack, he farted in the face of the devil and shouted defiantly, “I AM Baptized.” Luther understood that baptism IS (present tense) a done deal.

*“That the Baptism of infants is pleasing to Christ is sufficiently proved from his own work. God has sanctified many who have been thus baptized and has given them the Holy Spirit. Even today there are not a few whose doctrine and life attest that they have the Holy Spirit.” —Luther*

St. Peter proclaims the promises of holy baptism: “God has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.” “You shall be holy for I Am holy.” “You have been born again not of

perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and abiding Word of God.” “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that you may proclaim the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” “Baptism now saves you.” “After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”

In the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, renunciation and confession both take place. Renouncing Satan is an exorcism dating back to the second century (Hippolytus & the Apostolic Tradition). It is perfectly fitting to say “Be gone Satan” on the day of one’s christening. Hippolytus displayed a dramatic sense from which we might learn today. He had baptismal candidates face the west during the Service to show that as the sun goes down, so does the power of the devil. In Eastern Orthodoxy, the adult spits toward the west.

**June 2017  
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### *Food For Thought:*

*“In Baptism, therefore, every Christian has enough to study and practice all his life.”*

*— Martin Luther,  
Large Catechism*

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## Is TRUTH Relative and Subjective?

How long would you continue to fly with an airline whose motto was "Safety Standards are Fine for Those Who Are Uptight About It, But Our Engineers Aren't So Narrow"? How excited would you be about going under the scalpel of a surgeon who told you: "You know, I never bothered much with anatomy in Medical school, since all medical truth is relative anyway"? How long would you leave your child in a school where the chemistry teacher said to her, "You're free to drink from either that container of H<sub>2</sub>O or that beaker of H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. After all, they're both clear liquids and we're only talking about a couple of molecules here or there, so imbibe whatever you prefer"? (From: Daniel D. Meyer, People of the Way).

Scripture teaches us that TRUTH is absolute and objective, not relative and subjective. Jesus declares, "I, I AM, the Way and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me." There is only one way into the Sheepfold. Jesus says, "I, I AM, the Door." Jesus speaks sweet words that are often hard to swallow. Hence He says, "And blessed is the one who is not offended by me" (Mt. 11:6).

## SATURDAY SCHOOL & G.I.F.T.

Saturday School for kids, and G.I.F.T. for adults, have ended until fall. Both resume on Saturday, September 9. Current plans for G.I.F.T. in the fall include a four week study on the Letter of Jude, led by Pastor Waldemar Gies. The Letter of Jude is only 25 verses long, but cites nine different examples of God's judgment from the Old Testament. Jude exhorts his readers to beware of false teachers. G.I.F.T. will also be looking at Islam in the fall.

## WORSHIP PIANIST - update

At the end of April, we said farewell to our beloved pianist, MarJean Damerval. We are still keeping our eyes and ears open for a permanent replacement. God has faithfully provided Emmanuel with substitute worship pianists for May-August. Special thanks to Karen Salz who will be our worship pianist on June 3 & 10; Pastor P.J. Stohlmann who will be our worship pianist on June 17; and Leslie Duesenberg who will be our worship pianist on June 24. Let Pastor Dave know if you hear of someone who is a gifted pianist looking for an opportunity to serve in Worship.

## CALENDAR DATES!

Saturday, June 3: New Life Family Services is hosting a "Walk & Run for Life".

Monday-Friday, July 24-28 (5:30-8:00pm): Oasis Vacation Bible School.

Tuesday, August 1 (5-9pm): National Night Out. Emmanuel will host a neighborhood gathering in the Oasis Church parking lot.

Sunday, August 6: 12:00 Noon - Emmanuel Church Picnic at the home of Larry & Deb Vomhof.

Saturday, August 26 (6pm): Second Annual Music Celebration Worship Service.

Saturday, September 16th: Iowa Mission District Convocation at Old East Paint Creek, Waterville, IA

## Confirmation Class: The Chronicles of Narnia

Pastor Dave will be leading a class on C.S. Lewis' "The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe" during the month of July. This class will explore the message of Redemption in the name of Jesus. Youth in grades 3-8 are invited to participate.

## Electronic Giving

Members wishing to contribute to Emmanuel Lutheran with automatic giving may do so by contacting Judy Caudill or Deb Vomhof. Offerings are transferred once a month on the 15th of the month. Thanks for supporting the holy work of God at Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Rochester, MN.

## SINCE YOU ASKED...

What good purpose is there in signing oneself (making the sign of the cross with the hand over one's head and breast)?

This gesture's main purpose is to remind us of our baptism where the sign of the cross was first made on our foreheads. The cross is a powerful symbol which reminds us of the depths of God's love for us – He loved us so much that He sent His Son to die for us. In Holy Baptism we have been joined to Christ. Every time we sign ourselves we declare that we belong to Christ and that we desire to live for Him. We give visible expression that we serve the One, True God who has revealed Himself to us in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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There is no expiration date on the benefits of baptism. We baptize in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, as commanded by Christ, who has all authority. Baptism is our union with Jesus Christ in Good Friday & Easter morning. What about infant baptism? There are no Scriptural texts explicitly commanding infant baptism or explicitly forbidding infant baptism. Some people make a distinction between infant baptism and believer's baptism. But Luther reminds us that infant baptism is believer's baptism. Luther cited the example of John the Baptist leaping in Elizabeth's womb in the presence of an Immaculate Conception (pregnant Mary) bearing witness to Jesus.

We know that in the New Testament (Acts 16:15, Acts 16:31–33, I Corinthians 1:16), entire households were baptized; presumably including infants and children. The Christian Church from the second to the fifteenth centuries practiced infant baptism, unchallenged. Jesus blessed children and referenced them as a harbinger of the Kingdom: "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" — Mark 10:15. Peter announces that the promise is "for you and your children" in his Pentecost Sermon (Acts 2). Infant baptism is seen as showing very clearly that salvation is an unmerited favor from God, not the fruit of human effort.

In the special section on infant baptism in his Large Catechism, Luther argues that infant baptism is God-pleasing because persons so baptized were reborn and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Luther also reminds us that it is the responsibility of a child's parents and church to nurture a child's faith: "We bring the child with the purpose and hope that he may believe, and we pray God to grant him faith. But we do not baptize him on that account, but solely on the command of God. Why? Because we know that God does not lie. My neighbor and I — in short, all men — may err and deceive, but God's Word cannot err."

In the New Testament, there is compelling evidence to suggest that the Old Testament circumcision rite has been replaced by baptism. For instance: "In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism" (Col. 2:11-12a). The first birth (original sin) requires a second birth (washing of regeneration) which guarantees a third birth (resurrection unto eternal life). All who believe and are baptized shall see the Lord's salvation. Baptism now saves you! Baptism anyone?

*Christened and Christening, Pastor Dave*

## WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR JUNE

<b>Saturday, June 3 - Pentecost (6pm)</b> Scripture Reader & Prayers: Jean Wanek Ushers: Darald & Leitha Bothun Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler	PIANIST: Karen Salz  Communion Assistant: Jean Wanek Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan Treats: Julie Steffenson
<b>Saturday, June 10 - Holy Trinity (6pm)</b> Scripture Reader & Prayers: Jenna Serr Ushers: Mat Serr & Brock Edwards Acolyte: Emma Matzke	PIANIST: Karen Salz  Communion Assistant: Jenna Serr Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan Treats: Julie Edwards
<b>Saturday, June 17 - Pentecost II (6pm)</b> Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill Ushers: Creig Anderson & Bob Mulvihill Acolyte: Cabe Siebenaler	PIANIST: Rev. P.J. Stohlmann  Communion Assistant: Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan Treats: Janet Sunde & Julie Engle
<b>Saturday, June 24 - Pentecost III (6pm)</b> Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce Ushers: Rich Sunde & LeRoy Quam Acolyte: Elijah Matzke	PIANIST: Leslie Duesenberg  Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan Treats: Judy Pearce

**NOTE:** Julie Steffenson will take care of set up, & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down. Pastor Dave will be our preacher each week, except June 24 when Pastor Tim Duesenberg will fill in.

**Baptism of Hope Noelle Serr:** We welcomed our newest member into the Emmanuel church family on May 27! Hope Noelle Serr was born on September 4, 2016 into the loving family of Matthew and Jenna Serr, and Nora & Scarlett. Hope Serr's godparents are: Rachel and T.J. Cafferty.

## Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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### Save the Date!

*\*August 1 (5-9pm): Emmanuel hosting National Night Out.*

*\*Sunday, August 6 (12:00 Noon) Emmanuel Church Picnic at the home of Larry & Debbie*

## The Holy Trinity - Sola Publishing

“Therefore we should not dispute about how it can be that God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God, for it is by its very nature beyond all reason, but it should be enough for us that God speaks in this way about himself and reveals himself thus in his Word.” (Martin Luther, Sermons on John 3. WA 52).

The glory of the Father is incomplete without the Son and the Holy Spirit. God is not God alone. Without someone to love before creation, God would not have been love. That God is One, but Three, is at first peculiar, but then sensible and necessary. Nothing is more palatable to the believer’s spirit than the truth of the multiple Oneness of God. Without the doctrine of the Trinity, we do not fully comprehend the need for creation or even of salvation. God is mindful of us because caring for others is his eternal nature.

The Trinity, as impossible as it is to reason, makes sense of such matters. We believe in God’s multiple Oneness by certain faith, that the Spirit of God kindles and keeps alive.

## THE DIVINE SERVICE

Many NALC congregations refer to weekly worship as “The Divine Service”. This title reminds us that what is most important in worship is that we are being served by our Lord as we gather in his name. How sad for someone to say, “I didn’t get anything out of The Service.”

## Back Page Stories

**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.

**Women’s Bible Studies:** The Afternoon Group is studying the Biblical View of Marriage & Family (April 20-June 8) on Thursdays at 1pm at Oasis Church. The Evening Group is studying Revelation monthly at the home of Katie Siebenaler at 6:30pm. Final Session: Thursday, June 8.

**Supermarket Saturday:** The next Channel One ministry opportunity is

June 17, 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 2017. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, June 7 & 14 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

**Church Council Highlights - May 4:** Financial report: We are one-third of the way through the year. Income for April was \$9,664.40; expenses were \$7,689.85; resulting in a net gain of \$1,974.55. Currently

we have a Year-To-Date shortfall of \$2,642.94. Benevolences dollars for NALC, NALS, Iowa Mission District, and ICV will be submitted by the end of June. Lee Pearce and Pastor Dave are registered for the NALC Convocation (August 9-11) in Nashville, TN. Total cost is \$1,176.45. Outside lighting and a new Emmanuel Sign is pending. A goal of one hour of bell ringing for each Emmanuel Member has been set. A Music Celebration Service is set for Saturday, August 26. Usher training is underway. Planning session for Seniors will be addressed in the fall. Julie Engle has volunteered to be our Emmanuel “Care Ministry Coordinator”. Our next council meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 2 at 12:00 Noon.