

The Emmanuel Epistle

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

Pastor’s Keyboard: “Discipleship: Everyday Missionaries”

Rise, Shine, You People!
Indeed, we are empowered & commissioned for rising. But for what purpose. *“Tell how the Father sent His Son to save us. Tell of the Son who life & freedom gave us. Tell how the Spirit calls from every nation, His new creation!”* To rise and shine is to GO AND TELL! We are Everyday Missionaries!

Recently, I had the good fortune of participating in a SEMAC mission trip in Dayton, Ohio. Our servant group, under the leadership of Larry Vomhof, stayed at Salem Lutheran Church in West Alexandria, Ohio. The members of this NALC congregation have a “missional mindset.” They practice their discipleship, eagerly, in daily life.

During our stay, a man by the name of Jack presented me with two books by Greg Finke. My flight home from Ohio got delayed for six hours in Detroit. In everything God works for good. During my delay, I read the first of two books that Jack gave me. The title of Finke’s first book is, Joining Jesus on His Mission: How to Be an Everyday Missionary.”

Discipleship is at the center of what it means to be a



follower of Jesus and a member of the NALC. Finke’s premise is this: “We’re not on a mission for Jesus but *with* Jesus!” What’s the difference you ask? Finke writes, “The first time I realized that Jesus was inviting me to come *with* him and not go *for* him was a great relief. If I go *for* Jesus, I am doing the work and seeing the results of what I can accomplish. When I go *with* Jesus, he is doing the work and I am seeing the results of what Jesus can accomplish.”

“It’s better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing flawlessly.”
— author unknown

When we do something *for* Jesus, we are in the driver’s seat, earning what we get. But when we do something *with* Jesus, Jesus is in the driver’s seat. We keep company with our Lord, who gives us daily grace.

Jesus went to the cross for our salvation. God has saved us for **missional living** in our neighborhoods. Joining Jesus on His redemptive mission is what it means to live missional. *As we go* (Matthew 28: 19-20), we make disciples of all nations. *Actually*, God does the making. But God uses His church, His everyday missionaries to baptize & teach. Discipleship is contagious. Being a disciple...makes disciples.

What is the mindset and faith practices needed if one is to be an everyday missionary? Ask yourself, “How is Jesus messing with me?” Ask yourself, “Who is God readying and ripening in my neighborhood?” Jesus is in charge of readying and ripening. Our job is to watch for people who are ripe.

Finke writes, “This is our new missional mindset: We know Jesus is already out there in our *neighborhoods* doing the heavy lifting of

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March 2020
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Food For Thought:

“O Lord, everything good in me is due to you. The rest is my fault.”

—St. Augustine

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Daylight Saving Time Begins—March 8!

Set your clocks ahead one hour on Sunday morning, March 8 at 2am. During the Season of Lent we gain an extra day in February (Leap Year) and lose one hour on March 8. What will we do with the gift of an extra 23 hours?

Women's Bible Study

The Women of Emmanuel will gather for a short Five Session Study on *I Peter* during the Season of Easter. First Peter is a baptismal homily celebrating the promise of Easter & the hope of the resurrection. Study Dates: April 23, 30, May 7, 14, & 28 at Oasis Church on Thursdays at 1pm.

SEMAC MISSION TRIP 2020

This year's SEMAC mission (February 9-21) in Dayton, Ohio, was a huge success. All the glory goes to our Heavenly Father, whom we serve with glad and generous hearts. About 12 families were aided with items such as insulation, sheet rock, siding, plumbing, a patio door, & kitchen cabinets. Working with the NALC Disaster Response, we were able to witness to our faith in Jesus. SEMAC made the Dayton, Ohio newspaper and evening news. God's story of love and hope, in the name of Jesus, was offered to the residents of Dayton. We worshipped with our hosting Church, Salem Lutheran, NALC in West Alexandria, Ohio.

WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR MARCH 2020

Tuesday, March 3 - Faith Stories (6pm)

Usher: Darald Bothun

Faith Story: Julie Steffenson

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Sound: Don Holtan

Saturday, March 7 - Lent 2 (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Julie Steffenson

Ushers: Darald Bothun & Bob Harms

Acolyte: Nora Serr

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Communion Assistant: Jenna Serr

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Deb Vomhof & Judy Caudill

Tuesday, March 10 - Faith Stories (6pm)

Usher: Darald Bothun

Faith Story: Gary Melin

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Sound: Don Holtan

Saturday, March 14 - Lent 3 (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Jenna Serr

Ushers: Creig Anderson & LeRoy Quam

Acolyte: **Pending**

PIANIST: Karen Salz

Communion Assistant: Judy Caudill

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Julie Edwards

Tuesday, March 17 - Faith Story (6pm)

Usher: LeRoy Quam

Faith Story: Jean Wanek

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Sound: Don Holtan

Saturday, March 21 - Lent 4 (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce

Ushers: Tom & Sheri Vomhof

Acolyte: **Pending**

PIANIST: MarJean Dameerval

Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Judy Pearce

Tuesday, March 24 - Faith Stories (6pm)

Usher: Arne Nelson

Faith Story: Bob Harms

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Sound: Don Holtan

Saturday, March 28 - Lent 5 (6pm)

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill

Ushers: Bob Mulvihill & Darald Bothun

Acolyte: Gavin or Mason Edwards

PIANIST: Mary Ann Groven

Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson

Sound & Coffee: Don & Peg Holtan

Treats: Leitha Bothun

Tuesday, March 31 - Faith Stories (6pm)

Ushers: Larry & Joe Vomhof

Faith Story: Jana Pecinovsky

PIANIST: MarJean Damerval

Sound: Don Holtan

NOTE: Julie Steffenson will take care of set up & Janet Sunde & friends will take care of the take down during the month. Pastor Dave will preach at all Worship Services. Greeters: Don & Peg Holtan. Soup Suppers are served each Tuesday night at 5pm followed by Holden Evening Prayer (HEP) Worship at 6pm.

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ripening people for their next step toward his Father's redemption?" Remember, we are joining Jesus on His mission. So stop stalling. "It's better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing flawlessly." Joining Jesus on his redemptive mission is simply a matter of enjoying people, and then seeking, recognizing, and responding to what Jesus is already doing in the lives of the people we are enjoying. Authentic friendship is an "*agenda-less friendship*." Finke writes, "Our 'agenda' is to have no other agenda than to enjoy the person and watch for how Jesus unfolds *his* agenda."

Neighborhood missionaries ask, "How can I join Jesus in what He is already doing here?" During the Season of Lent we can prayerfully ask, "Jesus, what are you up to today?" and then, "How would you have me join you?" In the midst of our chronological lives (*Chronos*), we need to watch for divine appointments and sacred opportunities (*Kairos*). Jesus is on a mission. Redemption is what Jesus does. Everyday missionaries don't believe in coincidences; they believe in God-incidences. In the words of Jesus, "The Kingdom of God is Now!"

We are both beneficiaries & agents of God restoring His created world. A missional mindset and the necessary mission practices is God's gift to Everyday Missionaries. Finke writes, "The 5 Practices (Seeking the Kingdom, Hearing from Jesus, Talking with People, Doing Good, & Ministering through Prayer) are not what we do when we go to church. The 5 Practices are what we do when we go out to *be* the Church and join Jesus in our everyday lives."

Let me close with a final thought from Finke as we journey through Lent: "Wherever you go, there you are, & wherever you are, Jesus is already up to something." God wants us to move on from Bible Study to Bible Doing! The invitation is "*For you!*" Our Lord's commission really is a great commission. We are, IN CHRIST, everyday missionaries.

Living Missional, Pastor Dave

LENT at Emmanuel — Tuesdays

Our Lenten Theme this year is: "Faith Stories".

3 Members and 2 Friends of Emmanuel will be sharing episodes from their faith journey with us.

Our liturgy each week will be Holden Evening Prayer. Our Lenten *SOUPervisor* this year, coordinating our weekly soup suppers, is Julie Steffenson. Supper at 5pm and Worship at 6pm.

Lenten SOUP Schedule:

Tuesday, March 3: Judy Pearce (Chili) & Julie Steffenson (Cream of Potato).

Tuesday, March 10: Leitha Bothun & Jenna Serr; Bread & Milk: Mary Jo Grimsrud.

Tuesday, March 17: Peg Holtan (Beef Barley Vegetable) & Jean Wanek.

Tuesday, March 24: Marcia Harms (Chili) & Samia Nelson (Potato).

Tuesday, March 31: Deb Vomhof & Judy Caudill.

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.

Saturday School and G.I.F.T.

During the month of March, Julie will meet with the little ones and teach them Bible Stories. Pastor Dave will continue to lead the Adult G.I.F.T. class as they search the Scriptures and learn about "Congregational Renewal". All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

First Day of Spring

The Spring Equinox is the celebration of the first day of spring. The Spring Equinox 2020 is Friday, March 20th. What Is the Spring Equinox? Equinox literally means "equal night."

Lutherans for Life

The facts don't lie. The most recent data available shockingly reveals that in 2016 more black babies were killed by abortion than were born in New York City. In 2016 black abortions accounted for nearly 40% of all abortions in NYC. Out of 59,854 total abortions reported in NYC, nearly 67 percent were committed on minority black (23,209) and Hispanic women (16,718). According to the CDC, in 2016, NYC also had the highest overall abortion ratio of the selected states they reviewed, committing 519 abortions per 1,000 live births.

Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

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SAVE THE DATES!

“Easter Monday Bible Reading”

April 13 (5am-Midnight)

Gift of Grace: 10 year Anniversary

Sunday, June 7 (1-4pm)

North American Lutheran Church Update

- How many congregations are in the NALC? There are now more than 437 congregations in the NALC, 17 of which joined in 2019. A new mission congregation has launched in St. Charles, MN, which may become a sister congregation to Emmanuel in the near future. Keep Trinity Lutheran of St. Charles, in your prayers.
- What percentage of the NALC congregations are mission congregations or house churches? More than 15% (i.e. 66+ congregations).
- Where do NALC Missionaries serve? They serve in Belarus, Congo, Haiti, Tanzania, and elsewhere.
- How many future NALC seminarians are presently preparing for ordination? 40+ future pastors are in seminary; most of whom are receiving full or partial tuition scholarships.
- Where has the NALC Disaster Response been active? Under the leadership of Mary Bates, NALC funds and members have offered Christ-centered compassion and aid to people who have experienced flooding in the Midwest, tornadoes in Ohio (SEMAC in Dayton), earthquakes in California, & continued rebuilding in areas affected by hurricanes. No Federal funds are received.
- What is a primary emphasis in the NALC? Life to Life Discipleship; disciples making disciples!



Back Page Stories

Madonna Towers Ministry:

Pastor Dave is leading worship & preaching at the Madonna Towers Skilled Care Chapel twice a month on Wednesdays in 2020. Members of Emmanuel are invited to participate in this ministry to seniors of our community. Our next Worship Services will be on Wednesdays, March 4 & 18 at 1:00pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this ministry.

Men's Morning Bible Study: The men of Emmanuel Lutheran meet on Tuesday mornings (8am) at the Oasis Church for Bible Study & fellowship. The men are currently studying the Augsburg Confession (1530). Join us

each week for conversation, goodies, & coffee!

Church Council Highlights:

February 6, 2020: We're starting off the new year financially well. Our January income was \$10,654, and our expenses were \$9,260. As is our custom, we submitted first fruits mission dollars to the following ministry partners: SEMAC, NALS, & the NALC. Pastor's pension was also submitted. Pastor noted that Sharon Matzke is taking a break from playing at Madonna Towers. MarJean Damerval and Mary Ann Groven will be our primary worship pianists for this missional outreach. The building team is meeting with Pete Schuller (AB Systems) and putting together a site plan for our

church land. The Audit Committee will make sure that we have insurance for our church land and for the baby grand piano. We welcome our newest Emmanuel member, Andy Peterson. Save the date: Our next annual meeting will be on Saturday, January 30, 2021. Pastor Dave shared information with us regarding "India Transformed," a ministry partner of the NALC. The next Council Meeting will be held on Friday, March 6 at 1pm.

Trinity Lutheran Church: A new mission congregation has been launched in St. Charles, MN. Please pray for our sisters and brothers at Trinity Lutheran. Pastor Dave & Pastor Gies are offering pulpit supply to our friends in St. Charles. May God guide and bless the growth of Trinity.