

# THE EMMANUEL EPISTLE

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

## Pastor's Keyboard: “Discipleship - Faith Formation”

*“Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow His example pure. Through a world that would deceive us, and to sin our spirits lure.”—LBW #487.*



Discipleship is not a “once and done” christening. It’s a lifelong journey with Jesus, with eternal implications. God places us into His quiver and designs us to be His polished arrows. God elects us and clothes us with His Holy Spirit so that we can grow up into the full maturity of Jesus. God says to His beloved children, “You are mine right now. When Christ appears you will be like Him. Trust me! It’s a done deal.”—I John 3.

A few years ago, a young mother called me on the phone and said, “Do you do baptisms?” I replied, “God does baptisms, but He sometimes uses my hands and voice to accomplish His holy purposes. Why do you ask?” The mother answered my probing question: “Because grandma wants the baby done.” The mother wasn’t interested in church. She had never worshiped at our congregation. She just wanted grandma’s nagging to end, so she decided to find a church that would get the baby done. Here’s the irony. Once baptized, one is both done and never done. In baptism, God says, “Game over! It is finished.

Done! Complete!” In baptism, God says, “Now begins your lifelong, wet walk of discipleship. The cross never goes away. You’re never done!” Reflecting on grandma’s request, I thought to myself, “Baptism is not hocus-pocus. Baptism is not once & done. We don’t graduate from baptism. Baptism is my daily dying and rising with Jesus. I have been crucified with Christ. Checkmate! Baptism is our commencement exercises.”

*“When you put faith, hope and love together, you can raise positive kids in a negative world.”*  
— Zig Ziglar

Recently, a member of Emmanuel asked me about Confirmation Ministry. I replied that Confirmation is not a program; it is a way of life. God wants us to be caked in the dust of Rabbi Jesus. From womb to empty tomb, God conscripts and commissions us to be disciples. So how

do we create a web of faith for members of the Body of Christ? Good question! The first step is to revisit the promises of baptism. Parents, godparents and sponsors are asked to pledge faithfulness to the faith formation of all the baptized; not just their biological offspring or close friends. In Christian love, children and adults are presented for Holy Baptism. We therefore are to faithfully bring the baptized to the Services of God’s House. Worship is a non-negotiable. We are to teach the baptized the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, & the Ten Commandments. It’s not the pastor’s job or the Sunday school teacher’s job to teach the faith. Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism as a resource for parents to use in the home to instruct their children in the faith. We are to place into the hands of the baptized the Holy Scriptures and to provide for their instruction in the Christian faith. We are in this ministry together. Done & Never Done at the same time.

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**October 2016  
Newsletter  
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### *Food For Thought:*

*“Parents are the face of God for their children.”*  
— Martin Luther

*If you are a parent, there is no more powerful pulpit than your dinner table or your child’s bedside with you as the preacher and teacher.*

### **INSIDE AND BACK PAGE NEWS**

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## **SAVE THE DATES!**

- **Saturday, October 8:** Bible Saturday. Bring your Bible. Dress in Emmanuel Witness Wear. Message: 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!

## **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. 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. We have also received a Thrivent Action Team gift of \$250.00 in support of this event! Yay God!

## **RINGING and ROCKING**

The Salvation Army's ***Red Kettle*** campaign begins officially on Saturday, November 19th with the theme "***Rock the Red Kettle!***" The Salvation Army has asked Emmanuel Lutheran to sponsor the staffing of two Red Kettles on Saturday the 19th at Hy-Vee's Circle Drive NW location from 9am until 5pm! What a way to kick-off this partnership that sponsors 33 locally-directed assistance programs. These are not hand-outs, but opportunities that train, lift-up and encourage people who are seeking to improve their lives.

We will deposit our \$500 local Salvation Army benevolence into the two kettles we're staffing on the 19th. The kick-off also is a matching donor day, so our \$500 turns into \$1,000! That truly demonstrates giving generously, one of ***Emmanuel Lutheran's*** marks of discipleship! Last year we staffed the Red Kettles for 45 hours of bell ringing and raised \$2,367.00, which is \$52.60 per hour. Let's set our goal for even more hours and more money in 2016. We Praise, Proclaim and Practice ***Emmanuel*** – God with us – in daily life as we help care for the needs of "the least of these" in our midst.

***Emmanuel Lutheran*** can start signing-up in mid-October for any dates, times and locations to ring bells during the Red Kettle drive. Lee Pearce will be our ***Emmanuel*** Bell Ringing Coordinator, so call, contact, or talk to Lee to sign-up for your favorite site. By registering as early as possible, we have a much better chance of getting the Red Kettle locations we want. Don't wait. Do it today!

Also, remember that Bell Ringing can be a fun family affair, and a wonderful opportunity to include all the family in this demonstration of servanthood. Bring the kids and especially the grandchildren to help. The people you greet love to see children ringing the bells and the children themselves will experience the joy of helping others.

***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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Faith webbing is the gift of wrapping and being wrapped so securely in the love of Jesus that little ones and big ones will forever want to be in Church. Faith webbing is rooted in outcome-based youth ministry. In other words, what faith skills does God want us to exhibit, and young people to acquire, in order to be prepared for a life of devotion & service to our Lord Jesus Christ? At Emmanuel Lutheran we emphasize faith practices; aka “marks of discipleship”. God’s desired outcomes in the lives of His people are: daily prayer, weekly worship, spiritual growth, daily engagement in God’s Word, service to others, sharing the good news, and generous living and giving.

On October 8, Gary Froiland will be at worship sharing with us the work of the Gideons. Oct. 8 will be Bible Saturday for servants of Emmanuel. We are encouraging all Emmanuel members to wear the Word to worship. Bring you Bible with you to church. Dress in Emmanuel witness wear if you have an Emmanuel Shirt. A display table will be in the Gathering area. Look at the faith resources that are available for purchase. Buy gifts for your children, & grandchildren. Purchase some of these resources as a gift to children growing up in faith at Emmanuel Lutheran; they’re family too. The children in our church are not someone else’s responsibility. They are our shared responsibility. It is our honor to walk with them and to raise them in the faith.

Julie Steffenson will continue to use her gifts in Saturday school, helping us raise our kids in the Christian faith. I will be teaching confirmation classes to our church kids. I will also be leading a weekly conversation with adults called G.I.F.T. – an acronym for “Growing In Faith Together”. Attend this half hour adult education opportunity each week before worship, and learn how to live, share, plant and water the faith in the lives of God’s little ones. Remember the story Charlotte’s Web? Charlotte was a barn spider who created webs with words: “Some Pig! Terrific! Radiant! Humble!” Her webbed words saved Wilbur’s life. We are God’s faith web, chosen and gifted for wrapping a web of faith around one another. God wants us to grow up together. Faith needs to be always “in formation”. If a spider’s web and words saved a pig’s life, just imagine what our God-given, Spirit-blessed, webs & words will do.

*“Onward in His footsteps treading, pilgrims here, our home above; full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Father’s bidding, faithful Lord with me abide, I will follow where you guide.”—LBW #487.*

Webbed and Webbing for Jesus, Pastor Dave

## **WORSHIP SERVANTS FOR OCTOBER - Liturgy: Holden Evening Prayer, etc.**

### **Saturday, October 1 - Pentecost XX (6pm)**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill      Communion Assistant: Katie Siebenaler  
Ushers: Jim Siebenaler & Addison; and Emma Matzke  
Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler      Treats: Judy Caudill

### **Saturday, October 8 - Pentecost XXI (6pm) - Bible Saturday - Gideons: Gary Froiland**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Sharon Matzke      Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson  
Ushers: Darald Bothun & Creig Anderson  
Acolyte: Elijah Matzke      Treats: Jean Wanek

### **Saturday, October 15 - Pentecost XXII (6pm)**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Don Holtan      Communion Assistant: Julie Steffenson  
Ushers: Brock Edwards & Mason and Gavin; & LeRoy Quam  
Acolyte: Cabe Siebenaler      Treats: Julie Edwards

### **Saturday, October 22 - Pentecost XXIII: (6pm)**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Vicky Mulvihill      Communion Assistant: Darald Bothun  
Ushers: LeRoy Quam & Bob Mulvihill  
Acolyte: Ava Siebenaler      Treats: Leitha Bothun

### **Saturday, October 29 - Pentecost XXIV: (6pm) - Eve of Reformation Sunday**

Scripture Reader & Prayers: Lee Pearce      Communion Assistant: Lee Pearce  
Ushers: Rich Sunde & Matt Serr, Nora & Scarlett  
Acolyte: Emma Matzke      Treats: Judy Pearce

**NOTE:** MarJean Damerval will be our pianist each week. 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.

## **“Killing Sunday School: The Bad News and the Good News in Sunday School Trends”**

Let’s start with the bad news: Sunday School attendance has been declining across denominations for several decades. There are a variety of cultural factors that have contributed to this decline, such as over-scheduled family lives & parental ambivalence about regular participation in organized religion. I recognize this decline in attendance is not actually news to most of us, and—please hear me out—I would also argue it’s not necessarily bad.

Because here’s the good news: We are living in a time of great creativity and innovation in ministry, and with this Sunday School crisis, we have the opportunity to reimagine children’s formation in a broader context.

Sunday school has a fascinating history, beginning in the 18th century as a solution to the problem of factory-employed kids making trouble in the streets of London on the Sabbath. [Child labor was an acceptable practice with poor and illiterate kids working 13+ hours a day, 6 days a week, & running wild on Sundays.] In Sunday School, children were taught social skills, reading, & catechism. A handful of Methodist women, friends of John Wesley, began the experiment: “With Bible in one hand & a hickory switch in the other, they saw their schools as the front lines in an ‘irresistible attack against ignorance and vice—those worst of enemies to the human race.’ In 1740 Wesley wrote: ‘Who knows but that some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians’” (Rich Melheim, p. 35). In contrast, Christian education for respectable children took place in the home and was understood to be the responsibility of parents according to clear Biblical mandates. In fact, many churchgoers strongly opposed Sunday School because they were concerned the Church was taking [faith] formation out of the hands of parents.

It only took a few decades for the Sunday School experiment to explode, from one-room gatherings of street children to a worldwide movement, where more than a million children were attending in Britain alone. Fast-forward a couple hundred years,

and we find a much-altered landscape. Children now have the benefit of compulsory education and protection from sweatshop labor. And those who attend church are shepherded to a room where they are taught with other children about Jesus, a responsibility that has been transferred from families to the Church, confirming the fears of those who opposed the Sunday School movement in the 1700s.

Which brings us back to the good news: declining Sunday School attendance presents us with an opportunity to adapt the Church to the changing times, as the Church has adapted countless times over the past two millennia. There are a lot of churches now experimenting with various forms of intergenerational worship & Christian education. Work is happening to re-empower parents to teach their children the faith; home is where children and youth have always had their primary formation anyway, whether it was acknowledged & intentional or not.

I must mention that the traditional Sunday School model is still working just fine in many of our churches, where the Spirit flows through the creativity & faithfulness of the leaders. Children are learning the stories of the faith & how they fit into the great story. However, even churches not currently fretting over numbers & attendance would do well to pay attention to the cultural trend away from traditional Sunday School and begin the conversation about how our mission field is changing, and what those changes are inviting us to do.

The truth is, when multiple generations interact with each other in the Church, everyone benefits. When parents are supported in having conversations about faith at home, everyone benefits. We all contribute to each other’s formation, and adults can learn as much from children as we can teach them, if we’re willing to listen to children and their families and change our paradigms. And when we’re talking about ways to share the Gospel with the young and old and all those in between, it’s ALL good news.

*By Jana Sundin, Children's Ministries - St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Tombstone, AZ. (Oct. 20, 2015).*

## 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).

## Thank You Pastor ... and Ministry Team!

It's already October again. This is the month we officially celebrate Pastor Appreciation Month, a time set-aside to express our heartfelt 'thank you' to our Pastor. We will never know the depth of dedication and faith our Pastor has for the flock God has entrusted to him. We do know that Pastors are accountable to God for the shepherding of His flock, and they are primary cornerstones against the spiritual erosion we see in society today.

Those who serve sincerely under the call to ministry deserve our daily support through prayers, spiritual uplifting and affirmation. A nice pat on the back doesn't hurt anything either!

Let's make sure we let our Pastor know that we appreciate the unselfish service he renders.

Also, let's not forget the behind-the-scene support of pastors' wives. It is an imperative, and we are fortunate that *Emmanuel* has such a team in Pastor Dave and Julie. A special thank-you to Julie for all you do, especially heading-up children's education and Saturday School, as well as the weekly physical set-up of the sanctuary. Another critical part of our ministry team is MarJean Damerval who provides wonderful, inspiring music each week in a way that leaves us in awe. As Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 1:2, "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers."

We have the Good News of the Gospel to share with the world and a stupendous team that presents it in an incredibly vivid, soul-touching way each week. What better way can we thank our Pastor & our ministry team for all they do than by inviting someone to attend *Emmanuel* with you each week. Offer them a ride to church. Keep asking until they say 'yes.' That's truly 'Pastor Appreciation!'

— Your Fellow Servant, Lee Pearce, Council President

## Saturday School

Children are learning the stories of our Faith each week at 5:10pm. Adults are sharing conversations weekly at 5:15pm about "faith formation" in the lives of our young people. All adults are encouraged to participate in GIFT - Growing In Faith Together. It takes a "faith village" to raise a child in the Christian Faith. Thanks for doing your part.

## BIBLE Saturday

On Saturday, October 8, Emmanuel Lutheran will celebrate the gift of God's Word - the Holy Bible - in our lives. Bring your favorite Bible to worship with you. Emmanuel T-Shirts previously ordered will soon be available for pickup. Wear your new T-Shirt to worship on October 8.

On October 8, Gary Froiland will help lead us in worship and also share testimonies regarding the work of the Gideons. Gary, a gifted musician, will also favor us with some musical selections. A freewill offering will be received in support of the work of the Gideons.

The kids choir will be offering a "gift of music" in worship on October 8. A Table Display of resources for faith formation will also be available.

## Emmanuel Lutheran of Rochester, Minnesota

1815—38th Street NW  
Rochester, MN 55901  
Attn. Pastor Dave Steffenson

### Contact Information:

253-302-9845 (Mobile)  
**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!*

## Men's Bible Study & Continental Breakfast NEW LOCATION: Oasis Church

We've relocated our Men's Bible Study to Oasis Church. A simple Continental Breakfast is served each Tuesday morning at 8am. Our men's study begins at 8:15am & is finished by 9:30am. Our study is on the Book of Revelation. Please join us! Invite a friend! The coffee's always on!

## PRAYING FOR OUR SCHOOLS

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

## New Life Family Services

### Abundant Life: Annual Gala & Silent Auction

Thanks for supporting the Sanctity of Life with your presence, prayers & financial gifts. The mission of New Life: Changing Hearts! Saving Lives! Building Families! Restoring Hope!

This year's Banquet will be on Thursday, October 27 at the Rochester International Event Center. Silent Auction at 6pm and Dinner & Program at 7pm. Claire Culwell is the keynote speaker. Abortion took the life of her twin 22 years ago, but she somehow, by the grace of God, survived. Plan to attend!

## 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 October 15, 2016 (9 am—Noon).

**Women's Bible Studies:** The Afternoon & Evening Women's Bible Study groups are 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, October 5 & 19 at 1:00 pm. Give Lee Pearce a call if you would like to help with this wonderful ministry.

**Church Council Highlights - September 7:** We met at the home of Pastor Dave. New this year with Saturday School is an adult education opportunity called G.I.F.T. Pastor is leading a Bible Study on Jonah at Marcia Harms—Zumbro Lutheran Circle. Pastor shared a proposal for Faith formation and Confirmation Ministry at Emmanuel.

We've had a great response on Logo Wear (Emmanuel T-Shirts). An agenda was approved for the Sept. 24 HUDDLE. Emmanuel has received a \$250 Thrivent Action Team gift for refreshments at the Garms Family Concert. Pastor attended the Iowa Convocation solo. Visitor & Welcome mugs/gifts were discussed. Should we place an ad in the Post-Bulletin for Christmas? SEMAC is doing mission work in West Virginia this year (Feb. 11-24). Next Council Mtg. is October 5 at 5pm at Oasis Church.

**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.