

EMMANUEL'S EPISTLE

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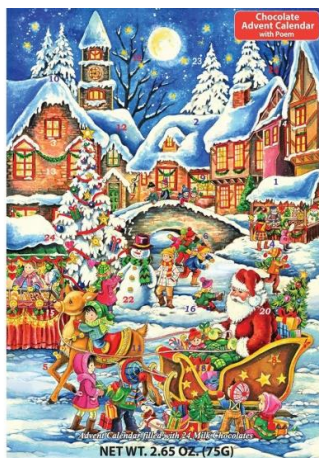
DECEMBER 2019

FROM THE PASTOR

THE SEASON OF DEEP LONGING

One of the things I remember rather vividly from my childhood is the Advent Calendar my parents would bring out on the first day of December. For twenty-four days I would open a little "door" each morning. Behind the "door" was a piece of chocolate in the form of a Christmas image, religious or secular. On Christmas Eve the chocolate piece was much larger and always came in form of the manger scene with Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus.

This tradition was important enough to me that we continued it when our children were small. As a matter of fact, after moving to America, my family would send us these calendars so the boys could maintain the excitement.



Over the decades these calendars have found their way into the American scene of pre-Christmas

staples. Some calendars now have poems or Scripture verses behind their "doors". But, such is not the end! As I learned fairly recently, one of the larger grocery store chains, with its roots in the German market, offers Advent Calendars with cheese or wine or even beer. Apparently they are selling out fast and the availability is very limited. Of course, these little calendars are not so little any longer and neither are they cheap. Now, I have absolutely nothing against a good chunk of cheese. Wine is fine as well and I can tolerate beer if I have to. As far as consumer enticement goes, one has to hand it to the company – unique, indeed. But, I am truly stretching my imagination trying to figure out what all of this has to do with preparation for Christmas – other than being well trained for gluttonous eating and drinking, perhaps.

If I am honest with myself -- and I am absolutely not prone to cry after the "good old days" -- I have noticed many changes even in my own life that have taken away from of the importance of the season. Germans speak of Advent with the fondness of "Besinnlichkeit", perhaps best translated as "contemplativeness".

At our home we have two different Advent wreath options. Both are lovely and in years past we would faithfully light the candles – one more each week until the Christ- Candle in the middle shone bright on Christmas Day. Often we would sit

around the wreath, tea cup in hand, talking or singing a hymn and reading a seasonal devotion. It still amazes me to realize that I nevertheless had enough time to do my work, take care of my kids and do the laundry. This time of “Besinnlichkeit” never seemed to take away from our responsibilities nor add stress. Not so much nowadays. The Advent wreath has not yet made it out of storage and onto the living room table. If we light the candles, it probably won’t be until I am done with the Christmas Day service (when I am basically comatose anyway! ☺) and so forth...



The Advent Season by definition includes a deep and holy longing. In our lessons during Advent worship we hear the words of the prophets to Israel. God’s chosen people longed for God to come and redeem them. They had experienced many struggles and even when life was peaceful and content something was missing. It probably is not much different today. For most of us life is fine or at least ‘okay’. We would like to walk through this season with gladness and laughter and celebrate the true light, Jesus, who has been promised to us as the only remedy that will dispel the darkness of our hearts, lives and world.

But, all of us know that just because the Church says it is Advent, we will not escape the struggles of our days. Grief, loneliness, anger, hostility, ill health, fractured relationships – they all are still here. Peace still escapes us and we all know that we often simply put on a smiling face so we do not get accused of being a ‘spoil sport’.

Yet – during Advent we live and wait in hope as we remember the ways in which our God in Christ has come and promises to come again for us. Advent means ‘Coming’. God has come in the incarnate Jesus. He continues to come through Christ who is

present in the hearing of the Word and in the tangible gift of the Sacraments. Moreover, Jesus will come again to bring to completion the entire work of salvation that God began in the birth of the babe at Bethlehem-Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

To grasp all of that, we need some time for reflection before we rush to kneel at the manger. The Church was wise in giving us this time. Let’s not ignore it or consider it obsolete.

The Advent Season of 2019 is short with the first Sunday of Advent falling on the first day of December. My encouragement is that we make the best out of it by giving in to our deep longings for the world and for ourselves. With the prophets let us be convinced that even in the darkest of days our restoration to full and everlasting life is never in question. “The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this”, Isaiah tells us.

Of course, Advent brings us to Christmas. If Christmas is indeed as important as we say it is (and it IS!), we had better be prepared. Nobody rushes into a wedding without preparations. Nobody goes on a trip without preparations. Nobody buys a home without proper preparations, financial, personal, legal or otherwise. Why do we so often think we can truly understand what God is doing in the miracle of the Incarnation without any contemplation and preparation? Frankly, we can’t.

I don’t have an old-fashioned Advent calendar and I am not interested in the ones with cheese, wine or beer. But I still have my Advent wreath with four large candles, one for each Sunday of the season. I still have tea to brew; I still know some Advent hymns that can be sung and I am sure we can find something to talk about and a devotion to read at my house. I know I have a deep and holy longing in my heart that only God can fill. And so do you. And all of us have a promise: “The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”

May God bless you as you walk through this season of deep holy longings and trust that they will be fulfilled. PZ+



Dear Members and Friends of Emmanuel

We are sending warm and sincere prayers for a very Merry Christmas and a blessed 2020 to each and every one of you. May God keep you in His tender care, protect you from all evil and fill your days with joy and contentment. This will be our eighth Christmas in your midst and we continue to be deeply grateful for your exceeding kindness toward us and our family. We could not ask for a better community of brothers and sisters in Christ to spend our days and we thank God for you. You are a blessing to us and we are grateful for the privilege of sharing our joys and sorrows with you and to be privy to yours.

Christmas is About Hope

That we shall not perish.

Earthquakes

Floods

Storms

Wars

Persecutions

Wars

Famines

Death

But we who believe have hope.

All will be made alive!

All things will be made new!

All will see Him face to face!

The anchor of our souls,

Firm and secure

Upcoming events at Emmanuel:

Advent Services: Wednesdays --
December 4th 11th and 18th at 6:30 p.m.

Children's Christmas Program:
"Christmas in Genesis? How Could This Be?"
Sunday, December 15th at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve (Candlelight) Service:
Tuesday, December 24th at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship w/Holy Communion
Wednesday, December 25th at 9:30 a.m.



**Children's
Christmas Program**

"Christmas in Genesis? How could This Be?"

Come and join us on
**Sunday, December 15th at 6:30 pm for our
2019 Sunday School Presentation**

We will join for a little celebration in the Fellowship Hall afterwards. Families are encouraged to bring along some cookies or a treat of their choice to share. Come and hear how the story of Jesus in the manger goes all the way back to the beginning of Scripture and God's story with humanity.



Merry Christmas! May this hope lead us every day of our lives --- Pastor Z and Michael

Joys & Sorrows

We express our condolences to the family and friends of Pastor Rose Marie Nack who passed away on November 24th, Christ the King Sunday, in Dawson, Mn. Pastor Rose Marie served for several years as our Visitation Pastor here at Emmanuel. We thank God for her presence and ministry in our midst and commend her to the everlasting care of our God.



Pastoral Acts:

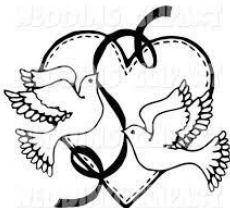


Flint Isaac Everett Henkle, son of Cody and Marena (Bartz) Henkle was baptized on November 17th.

Wyatt Jay Huinker, son of Brian and Taylor (Rustad) Huinker was baptized on December 1st.

We welcome them into our family at Emmanuel and pray for continued blessings upon them

Congratulations to Sara (Dalluge) and Tanner Hoy, who were united in marriage on Saturday, November 30th. May God bless this union and keep them in His care.



STEWARDSHIP MUSINGS



A word from our Stewardship Committee:

As you prepare for your Christmas contribution to Emmanuel, please be advised that \$1,500.00 of our combined Christmas offering will be given to our Benevolence Budget to be distributed to our

communally chosen charitable entities. All other monies will remain at Emmanuel for our General Fund purposes. We also want to thank you for your generous offering on Thanksgiving. We raised approximately \$1,500.00 for our Benevolence Fund during that time. Also, please know that we will be able to forward \$729.00 to our Mission Fest speaker's mission in South Africa. Your kindness will make a tremendous difference in the lives of the children and youths served at the Children's Village. Thank you for your generous support.

-Your Stewardship Committee

And the "Thank you" continues:

As those elected to see to the orderly and responsible execution of our ministry, we wish to thank all members and friends who so generously have supported our mission in 2019. We are pleased to see that we did not have to make any unexpected changes in our financial plans and maintained a positive balance each month of the year. Thank you for your care of your congregation! As the year draws to a close, we encourage you – and ourselves! – to remain faithful in our financial giving so Emmanuel Lutheran can start the new fiscal year on solid footing, looking toward a bright future. Thank you one and all. May God bless givers and gifts.

-The members of the Church Council and Pastor Zamzow

And a note from our Treasurer:

All contributions you wish to be added to your 2019 financial statement need to be in the office not later than noon on Sunday, December 29th so we can deposit them in time to be considered toward our current year accounting. Thank you very much.

Make sure to notice the beautiful statue of Jesus and the children in the nook of the Narthex. This is one of the items purchased with Memorial funds given by the family of Olive Trettin. There will be more items for display in the spring. Thank you to the task force for their work in choosing the items to be purchased and displayed at our church in her honor.

Toys for Tots has a drop off box here at Emmanuel-please consider donating a new, unwrapped gift for a child this Christmas season. Pick-up is generally a few weeks before Christmas.

THANK YOU EMMANUEL

"We would like to say thank you for all the thoughts, prayers, and help we've received in our time of need. Healing is going well and I should be back to normal soon."
-Klay and Nikki Rustad

"Thank you to Pastor Z and the congregation for your prayers for Lindsay. We are thrilled to say that because of you she is now cancer free. God is good indeed!"
- Mari and Mike Momberg

"Thank you to Pastor Z for her visits, prayers, and communion."
-Betty and Gene Rosenberg

"Thank you to the youth and leaders for the Random Acts of Kindness bags left on cars after worship on Mission Sunday. It was appreciated by all. Keep up the good work!"

"Thank you from the ENALCW to the donators of items for quilting. We appreciate all your donations and share with others what we are unable to use."

"Sincere thanks to the members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church for supporting Operation Christmas Child! Your contributions will greatly bless children throughout the world. May God bless you all!"
- In Christ, Cindy Ung
(Our congregation sent 25 boxes this year!)

"Thank you to everyone who sent greetings to me (us) for my 7th Anniversary at Emmanuel as well as for Pastor Appreciation in October and Thanksgiving. It is always most lovely to receive your kind words and signs of gratitude. Right back at you!"
- ☺PZ+ and Michael

Thank You Stewards

...to the November Hospitality Team: Julie & Curt Schaub, Jeff Schultz, Jason & Nicole Schuttler, Jason & Jody Hackbart, Jay Schaub, Linda & Gary Schotanus, Rod & Emi Kuntz, Nancy Walk, Gregg & Mary Jo Urbatsch, Orland Bartz, Dorothy Mensch, and Ken Fredrickson.

...to Emi Kuntz and Val Bork for serving on Altar Guild.

...to our Counting Team: Dan Nack and Jason Hackbart and our subs who helped out in a pinch: Lisa Bartz, Teresa Braun, Gloria Hackbart, and Kim Badker.

...to our ushers: Paul Hackbart, Garry Backhaus, Duaine Dierks, Alex Hackbart, and Marlin Rosenberg.

...to Dan Nack and Joshua Rosenberg for operating the P.A. System.

...to Val Bork for serving on Lay Ministry for the month of October.

...to Sue Walk and Linda Koschmeyer for spending many hours working with our new and absolutely lovely banners. Be sure to look closely when you are in worship.

THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Balance Information for October 1-31, 2019

***General Fund**

Beginning Balance: **\$8,743.29**

Interest: \$4.82

Revenues: \$7,226.10

Expenses: \$12,837.96

End of month Balance: \$3,136.25

***Benevolence Fund**

Beginning Balance: **\$4,966.09**

Revenues: \$320.00

Expense: \$0

End of month Balance: \$5,286.09

***Building Fund**

Beginning Balance: **\$12,618.62**

Revenues: \$95.00

Expense: \$0

End of month Balance: \$12,713.62

***Undesignated -Gifts and Memorials**

Beginning Balance: **\$7,232.51**

Revenues: \$9,273.12

(Closed out Contract with Thrivent)

Expenses: \$ 7,912.84

(Banners and Copier Down Payment)

End of month Balance: \$8,592.79

Did you know

...that you can find daily Advent Devotions ready for you on the small table by the wooden entry door? They are written by Pastor David Wendel, Assistant to Bishop Selbo.

...that the Office will be closed the day after Christmas?

...that our church doors are locked at 7:00 pm all week and at 6:00 pm on Sundays unless we have a scheduled event or someone needs to be able to enter? Please call Pastor if you need to have access at other times!!

...that, in case of inclement weather, we will inform you via the Mason City and Austin TV stations as well as an email blast, of any worship cancellations by 8:00 am on a Sunday if needed?

...that our Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 26th following our worship service? The deadline to submit reports, financial and from committees and auxiliaries, is Sunday, January 12th. If you are not sure whether or not you are to submit a report, feel free to check with Pastor. Please know that it would be very much appreciated to receive your articles in electronic form. For advice toward that end, please speak with Sharon in the office.

...that Pastor Z will take a few days vacation the week of December 30th so her office computer can be replaced without interruption to her work? She will be in Grafton during this time and you may contact her if pastoral care is needed.

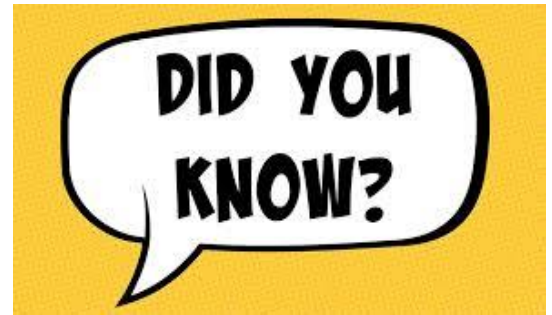
...that Bible Study and Confirmation classes will resume the week of January 6th?

...that the Women of Emmanuel are planning their annual Soup Supper for Sunday, February 9th? Be sure to put the date on your calendar and plan on helping and eating delicious soups 😊

...that the North American Lutheran Seminary has a new President? The Rev. Eric Riesen was chosen unanimously by the Board of Regents and will begin his work in January. Pastor Riesen currently serves a parish in Ohio and has done advanced studies in Theology and is the author of several books. The current President, Dr. Amy Schifrin, will continue to teach at the Seminary until her full retirement.

...that terrorism, immigration and health care are the three dominant concerns for white mainline protestants in our nation? Foreign election interference, climate change and health care are the top concerns for non-Christians and those not affiliated with any religion according to an American Values Survey.

...that Pope Francis' view on nuclear weapons can be summed up in a few simple words? Just say 'no'. The use and possession of weapons should be made "immoral" under official Catholic teaching, Francis told reporters in late November. He also expressed reservation concerning the use of nuclear energy. "An accident (through the) possession or the folly of some leader could destroy humanity," Francis said. "I have a personal opinion: I wouldn't use nuclear energy until it is totally safe to use it."



...that aiming to provide vital medical help for hundreds of thousands of traumatized, but courageous and resilient victims of Sudan's "hidden" war, U.S.-based nonprofit organization [African Mission Healthcare](#) (AMH) launched a new campaign in early December. The Nuba 2020 campaign goal is to ensure the only major hospital in Sudan's war-torn Nuba Mountains continues to save hundreds of thousands of children and adults threatened by conflict, disease and medical emergencies all year long. Shielded from much of the world, the little-known, yet catastrophic conflict in the Nuba Mountains—a region contested by the separate countries of Sudan and South Sudan—has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives and maimed and injured thousands more.

...that you may direct Choice Dollars to Emmanuel if you have products with Thrivent Financial? Each year your insurance, annuity, etc. generates so-called Choice Dollars which Thrivent releases back into the community. Emmanuel is registered to be a recipient of such funds. Please go to the Thrivent website at www.thrivent.com or call your agent for information.



Congregational Council Minutes- October 8th, 2019

Meeting called to order by: Darren Marsh- President

Attended: Pastor Zamzow, Kim Badker- Christian Education, Merlin Bartz- Evangelism, Nicole Cole- Youth, Marena Bartz-Stewardship, Sharon Hulshizer- Lay Ministry, Christa Larson-Treasurer

Absent: Mark Fredrickson-Vice President, Paul Hackbart-Property

Devotions: Merlin Bartz

Education Segment: Including Kids in Worship

Agenda review: M/S/C to accept agenda as corrected: Date change on agenda to October 8, add Sharon/Secretary under New Business.

Review Printed Minutes: M/S/C to accept the Minutes as presented

Treasurer's Report: Discussion where to list gifts/take monies from for those gifts. For now, we will take them from the gifts budget listed under general funds. More discussion will be done in November when we review budget items. **Treasurer's report accepted.**

Pastor's Report: 1) Pastor Z attended the Elayne Werges funeral and has been busy with many pastoral care issues. 2) A suggestion was made to add more money to the parsonage maintenance budget when preparing next year's budget, as there are items needing replacement or fixing in the near future. 3) Last year's cookie walk was successful, recommendation that we do it again in early December.

Board Highlights:

Property- none

Evangelism- Board has met with Brittany Bartz about the directory layout, made changes and additions.

Lay Ministry- no report

Stewardship- Thanksgiving offering will remain at Emmanuel and be added to the Benevolence budget to be distributed at the end of the year. Mission Sunday will be November 10th.

Youth- The Youth group kids and foreign exchange students from St Ansgar went to Osage Watts Theatre to see the movie "Overcomer". The youth are planning to do more community and service events.

Education- no report

Membership review: M/S/C to transfer membership for Brooke Clausen to Deer Creek Lutheran Church.

Unfinished business:

- a) **Banner Update:** The banner committee has met several times and has ordered 19 banners and two wooden stands from Wunderlich Woodworking. **M/S/C to close out the smaller Thrivent investment account from Jane Buechele, pay the bills for the banners and stands, and transfer any remaining monies to the Altar Guild fund.**
- b) **Trettin Memorial Update:** The committee has met and looked at several items to purchase with the memorial funds. They will come in November to update us on their decision.
- c) **Copy Machine Update:** The black and white printer that was in the office has been moved to the counting room to be used for ledger size enlargements and as needed. There is a small new scanner/copier in there as well that can be used for counters and Sunday School needs. A new color copier has been delivered to the office and the temporary color printer in the secretary's office will be removed and replaced with a fax machine. The Pastor and Secretary's computers will be replaced with refurbished computers for the cost already allocated for Pastor Z's computer, with the stipulation that if they do not perform as expected, they will be replaced with new. **M/S/C to take \$1000 from Undesignated Gifts & Memorials to make a down payment for the new color printer in the office.**

New Business:

a) **Sharon/New Secretary:** Sharon wished to thank the council for offering her the Secretary position. The transition has been going well and she looks forward to serving Emmanuel in the future.

Next month's devotion preparer: Mark Fredrickson
Next meeting date and time is: Tuesday, November 12th at 7:00 p.m.

M/S/C to adjourn the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.
-Secretary, Sharon Hulshizer



Next TWC Meeting:

Tuesday, December 17th at 9 a.m.

Come and join us as we decide how to spend our end of the year donations.

TWC (The Women's Council)

November 19, 2019

Charlotte shared devotions from Psalm 95:1-7, entitled, "Thanks for who God is." It is a reminder to us during this Thanksgiving season, that we be always thankful for God and the things he does in our life. He is the "Almighty God of the Universe." The meeting opened with the reading of the purpose. Secretary minutes from October were approved as corrected: *We will be sending layettes (not quilts) and activity/school kits*. Treasurer reports \$3,318.08 in checking. There are a few outstanding bills to pay. A thank you from the Northern Lights Alliance for the Homeless was read. Correspondence from Living Waters Cluster was shared. They reported that they collected LWR items from 15 different churches and included: 678 quilts, 142 baby kits, 1,063 school kits, 275 personal care kits, 16 fabric kits, and 21 blankets. We sent 86 school kits and 22 layettes in 16 boxes. They will be collecting items for LWR again on Monday, April 6th for Spring shipping.

Old Business: 1) LWR Projects: 37 quilts have been finished, with three more to be done. Future sewing days will be announced. 2) Olive Trettin Memorial: A statue of Jesus with children has been purchased so far. Other items will be purchased in the spring as they become available. Plans are to purchase a couple of benches and a planter.

New Business: 1) Coming events: KCMR Christmas on November 24th at 2 p.m. at NIACC/ NIACC Christmas Concert on December 5th at 7:30 p.m. 2) Discussion of options for activities next year. 3) Soup Supper: Date has been set for February 9th with a snow date on the 16th. We will put a reminder in the church newsletter for people look for items for the white elephant sale. 4) Thank offering: will be collected through the month of November. 5) Year-books: will be updated for the new year.

Next TWC will be Tuesday, December 17th at 9:00 a.m. Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

-Secretary, Sharon Hulshizer



Ladies...the First Lutheran Church Women of St. Ansgar invite you to attend a Christmas Program and Luncheon on Saturday,

December 14th at 10 a.m. at the First Lutheran Parish Center. The musical group "Witness 4" will present: "Mary Wrapped a Present to the World." There is no charge, but donations to the Mitchell County Food Bank are encouraged. (See the poster on the bulletin board for more information)

December 2019

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <i>1st Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 – Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 Fellowship 10:40 Sunday School (Christmas Program Practice)	2 	3	4 4:30 p.m.- Confirmation 6:30 p.m.- Advent Service 7:15 p.m.- Choir	5 9:30 a.m.- Bible Study	6 6p.m.-7:30 p.m.- Grafton Depot (Santa & CP Christmas Train)	7 9:30 a.m.12p.m.- Cookie-Walk @ Emmanuel
8 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30- Worship 10:30- Fellowship 10:40-Sunday School (Christmas Program Practice)	9	10 	11 4:30 p.m.- Confirmation 6:00-7:30 p.m.- Program practice for older kids 6:30 p.m.- Advent Service 7:15 p.m.- Choir	12 9:30 a.m.- Bible Study	13 	14
15 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 -Worship-Choir & Noisy Offering 10:30- Fellowship 10:40 – Sunday School (Program practice during and after) <i>“Christmas in Genesis? How could This Be?”</i> Children’s Program 6:30 p.m.	16 5:30 p.m.- Council Meeting	17 9 a.m. - TWC Meeting	18 4:30 p.m.- Confirmation 6:30 p.m.- Advent Service 7:15 p.m.- Choir	19 9:30 a.m.- Bible Study	20	21 
22 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30-Worship-Choir 10:30- Fellowship 10:40- Sunday School	23 	24 6:30 p.m.- Christmas Eve (Candlelight) Service Sharon out of office	25 9:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service with Holy Communion-	26 Church office closed	27 Sharon out of office	28
29 <i>1st Sunday of Christmas</i> 9:30- Worship with Holy Communion 10:30-Fellowship No Sunday School	30 PZ on Vacation	31 PZ on vacation 	1 January Happy New Year! No activities at church- Office Closed	2 January PZ on vacation	3 January PZ on vacation	4 January PZ in office

