



Emmanuel News



Vicar's Voice



The Cross, it is one of the most recognizable symbols that we use to identify Christianity. Before we explore the cross further, we should remember that for 800 years the Roman Empire practiced crucifixion to

strike fear into the hearts of its people. It was a terrifying death and anyone who witnessed crucifixion was not inclined to violate Roman law. One of the things that made crucifixion such an extremely effective crime deterrent was that they made sure these crucifixions took place along the main roadways where people traveling by with families would see them. Additionally, we must remember the goal of crucifixion was to inflict the maximum amount of pain, suffering, humility, and agony for the longest possible amount of time.

Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of penitence and preparation for the Three Days of Holy Week and Easter. Our practice of forty days of Lent recall Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness after his Baptism, as well as Moses' forty-day fast on Mount Sinai. The season of Lent is a time of solemn reflection. It is a time when we as Christians take time to identify those things which separate us from God, and from one another. The season of Lent invites us to examine the illusion of our own ego, which Thomas Merton referred to as the false self, a small self that works to remain anonymous and separate from God.

Lent is known as a time of repentance, a turning toward God, a time in which our relationship with God is reconciled, a fresh start, a relationship made anew. It is a time for discovering our true self, the self created in the image of God, a discovery that opens us to true love, the love that we receive from God, ourselves, and others. A love that we then reciprocate back to God and others. Franciscan priest Father Richard Rohr describes it in this manner "This true believer is tucked away in the cellar of your being, an *imago Dei* that begs to be allowed, to be fulfilled, and to show itself." he goes on further, writing "The True Self is the Divine Indwelling, the Holy Spirit within you. I would say *that the True Self is precisely the divine part of you that is great enough, deep enough, gracious enough to fully accept the human part of you. If you are merely human, you will tend to reject your embarrassingly limited humanity.*"

As those of us here at Emmanuel embark on the forty-day Lenten journey together, we will also be making that journey with Jesus as he makes his way to Jerusalem and to the foot of the cross, the location where the passion story of his arrest, torture, humiliation, death, resurrection, and new life will unfold. Our journey together will take place as we come together as a community of faith for midweek Lenten services. It is a time that will be spent in a service of evening prayer, meditation, and reflection. As we make this journey to the foot of the cross together, we will explore different theologies of the cross. We will engage and explore the uniquely different theories of atonement; theories that encompass and include substitutionary, subjective/moral, sacrificial offering, ransom, and Christus-victor.

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As Lutheran Christians, we hold onto a distinctive understanding of the cost of discipleship. Justification by faith shapes our individual and our corporate lives by knowing that there is nothing we can possibly do to earn enough grace to be made right with God and free ourselves from sin. It is through *sola fida*, faith alone, that we receive the free gift of God's grace, through Christ Jesus, and that our sins are forgiven. The doctrine of justification is a Lutheran foundation, and a primary focus for Luther was the consistent teaching and preaching of such throughout the world. With our theology of the cross, we understand the cost of discipleship, not simply as cheap grace, but rather as Christ's humiliation of hanging on the cross as God's direct connection and identification with the suffering of the human situation. For Lu-

therans, suffering is two-fold: the suffering of God in Christ, and the suffering of the Christian who is united with Christ. By surrendering our own suffering to the cross of Christ, we find God hidden in that suffering. And we, through the sacraments of

Baptism

and the Lord's Supper, share in the forgiveness of sins and receive unconditional love. During this Lenten season, as we identify what separates us from God and those around us, as we turn toward God in reconciling our relationship with God, we do so with comfort and knowledge. There is grace, unending grace, for our imperfections. There is hope. In new life, we find hope for healing all the forces that divide, oppress, and continue to inflict wounds upon our broken world, shaping our ministry into one of love.

In Christ Love,



Christikon Clip

March, 2022



Information for our Congregations

Christikon is an extension of your congregation's ministry.

Bus Attendants needed for 2022 –

Would you or someone you know be willing to ride with youth on their way to Christikon? Yes? Please call Kerry in the office at 406-656-1969 or email at secretary@christikon.org for details. It pays a daily rate as well!

Don't miss out on the Early Registration Discount for youth campers: Register by April 1st and save \$25 in any youth session. If you don't have the camp brochure mailed to you, pick one up at the church, or register online.

Adults and families: Watch for the special focus for each of the family/adult weekends next summer at Christikon: work projects, faith formation, and Bible study will be woven together with worship, meal fellowship, re-creation, folk dancing and much more. Check out camping for adults and families online at www.christikon.org.

It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.

CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102

406 656-1969 • secretary@christikon.org • www.christikon.org

The Food Pantry would like to express appreciation for your generosity through your food and financial donations. In the spirit of that appreciation, we are sharing a list of the items that are in high demand at this time and request you add them to your shopping list.

We Need The Following:

Cereal

Breads

Canned meat and/or meals (tuna, chicken, Manwich, Spaghettios,



CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

February 9th, 2022

The Council met on Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM. Vicar Keith opened the meeting with devotions based on Desmond Tutu's "Shalom".

The minutes from the January meeting were approved, motion made by Liz, seconded by Robin, and passed.

The Treasurer's report was discussed. It was recommended to transfer \$25,000 to a savings account, as there is so little interest earned otherwise, motion made by Liz and seconded by Sharon, and motion carried. Abbey's donation program "flock" and the Quick-Books is in progress, and Liz made a motion to continue with that, seconded by Sharon, and passed.

Jill made the Intern Committee report: the monthly meeting will be held on February 16th, at 6:30PM, at Dawn's house. Kristianne reported on the Call Committee, there is no update, and it will continue as it has been.

Youth Committee (Jill, Greg, and Liz) plans are in place for 1st Communion on Palm Sunday. training will be held for several Sundays in March. Our church will be sponsoring the LYC on March 6th, also. The Music Committee, consisting of Jill and Vicar Keith, is scheduled through May. March 27th, we will again have the Bell Choir at our church.

Old Business: A New Member class and induction will be held this spring, date to be announced. Lenten services and Easter plans: March 2, Ash Wednesday, services will be held at Huntley Methodist, jointly with Congregational Churches, and our church. At this time, there are no soup suppers planned for the Lenten services here at Emmanuel on March 9th

through April 13th, due to the COVID restrictions. Plans to have the Seder dinner on 4/14, Maundy Thursday, are still not definite. Robin has ordered the palms for Palm Sunday. On Good Friday, 4/15, there will be combined churches for the service at the Congregational Church in Ballantine. On April 17th, Easter Sunday, the Sunrise Services will be held, and also the normal 10:00 AM service at our church. It was undecided whether to have a breakfast, put on by the youth, at our church, following the sunrise services. That will be discussed at our next council meeting. A pastoral retreat is tentatively planned for April 24th. Confirmation Sunday will be held on May 1st.

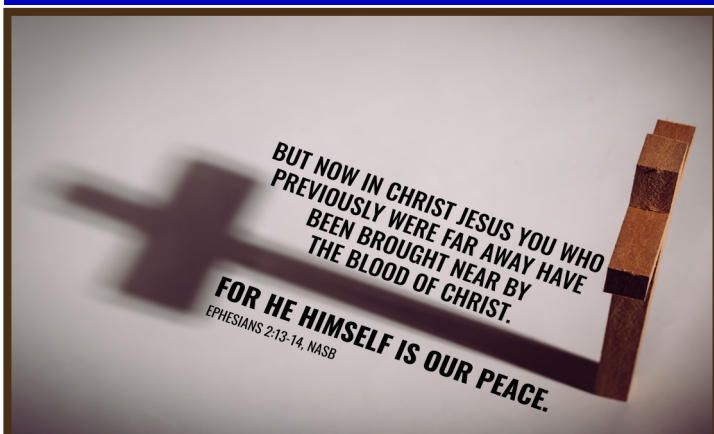
New Business: We need to set a date for the new member class and induction in May. We also need to set a date, tentatively February 27th, for the induction of new officers to the council, probably February 27th, and to honor those members who are

retiring. We also want to honor Linda Oberg for all her hard work. At this time, no date has been set for a Council retreat.

Robin made a motion, seconded by Sharon, to purchase an amplifier from the general fund. It was also decided to get a gift for those taking their first Communion, & giving them Bibles was suggested. Vicar Keith will order three dozen Bibles, and the order will be paid from the Memorial Fund, motion made by Liz, seconded by Robin. A motion was made by Liz, seconded by Robin, and passed, to get our newly elected representative, Lindsey Reynolds to have her name placed on our bank account.

Our next meeting will be held on March 9th, at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Dawn Petty, Secretary



Mid-week Lenten Services will be held Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm starting on March 9th through April 6th. We will be using the Holden Evening Prayer Service. (No soup suppers at this time)

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN

Ordinarily, we ladies were always busy this time of year, with preparing food and get-togethers along with our worship. It seems so strange not having time to visit with each other, and just saying "Hello" and "Good-bye" when we are together. As this pandemic is slowing down, perhaps we can plan on more social times around our regularly scheduled worship.

Should we have coffee hour after services?

We could have refreshments on a table in the back of the sanctuary? The basement area is being used for various classes right now, but we could be flexible, couldn't we? I would like to hear your thoughts on this.

Our quilting ladies have been getting together at least once a month, and recently every few weeks, to sew, socialize, and accomplish fellowship. The "mask mandate" has been lifted in numerous places, can we start to put ourselves into the "old normal" routine again? We could take



Women
of the
EVANGELICAL
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precautions on being together and we could pray that God would help us. We all need prayer. Christ asks us all to pray, to ask that it might be given us, to seek that we might find, to knock that the door will be opened to us. God wants to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. What a way to strengthen a congregation and people's lives. A praying congregation becomes a strong congregation. For that to happen, we need to be calling on the Lord, and putting him to work. Amen

I would like to hear comments from all of you.

Dawn Petty 373-6673

dawnpetty6@aol.com



The new members for church council, Lutheran Center, Synod Assembly, Christikon Representative, and Endowment Board were inducted into their respective positions on Sunday, February 27, 2022. Pictured, from left to right, are Laura Vanberg, Sue Hawthorn, Sharon Wolske, Lindsey Reynolds, Jill Hoffman, Ricker Olson, Dawn Petty, Abbey Emmons, Jennifer Ingram and Lauris Byxbe. Missing are Liz White, Robin McCaffree, Greg Plath, Meagan Machow, Kristianne Wilson, Brenda Emerick, Laurel Noland, Sari Stahl, Connie Herberg, and Patty McVay.

Thank you for your service to our Little White Church!

COMMENTARIES OF THE CHURCH MOUSE

Greetings Friends and Neighbors,

I must digress for just a moment. I had a fantastic day on the slopes last month for my birthday. The weather was nice and sunny, yet the snow was still in good shape. It sure was great flying down the slopes, wind in my fur and sun on my face. I managed to make it through the entire day without any mishaps and thoroughly enjoyed spending the day with my sons, shredding some snow. Ride up, race down, I was the brown blur of the mountain.

March is here, so we are once again forced to synch up all the clocks, as we spring forward on the 13th, with the beginning of Daylight Savings Time. I hate to think that I also get to lose an hour of sleep in the deal, but what can you do? Go with the flow and maybe make up for it with a Sunday afternoon nap. I plan to also follow the advice of the fire fighters and change the battery in all my smoke detectors. Better safe than sorry.

Then on the 17th, it's time to roll out the corned beef and cabbage, as we celebrate St. Patrick's Day. The only day of the year, where everyone is a wee bit Irish! I think that I will dye my fur green this year to show my enthusiasm for the day and maybe

even have a green beer or two. Happy St. Patrick's Day everyone. May the luck of the Irish follow you all year long.

Spring officially arrives on the 20th, so it won't be long now before we can put Old Man Winter to bed for the season. I am looking forward to everything starting to grow, bud out and green up. At this point



I'm more than ready to trade in my snow shovel for a little time with the rake and lawn mower. Looking forward to mushroom and asparagus hunting, even though that is still a couple of months away. Cabin fever has hit me a little harder this year, as I seem to talk to myself more than usual. Often Mrs. T.C. will yell to me from the kitchen, "Who you talking to in there?" as I'm chilling on the couch. I usually just tell her to never mind, as it is only lighthearted banter between Me, Myself, and I! Me tends to argue with Myself and I is a really good listener. No, don't worry, I'm not crazy, just brutally honest.

Happy March everybody. See you in Church.

Your faithful friend in residence at Emmanuel.
T. C. Mouse



First Communion Instruction

First communion classes for students and their parents will be held March 20th, 27th, April 3rd, and April 10th. Classes will take place during the regularly scheduled Sunday School time at 9:00 AM. The celebration of First Communion with students, families, and the congregation will take place during regular church service on Palm Sunday April 10th at 10:00 AM.

Please talk to Vicar Keith or email him at vicarkeithelc@gmail.com or call the church office at 406-373-5597 with any questions.



CARING RELATIONSHIPS

Prayers of the Church

Call Dawn Petty, 373-6673 with requests and updates

Carl Guerin, Karen's father-in-law, is getting better and will be transferred to a nursing / assisted living facility in Roundup later this week. Vivian Pierce's daughter, Sherry Main, had an epidural last week, and it helped reduce the pain for about a day, and now the pain is back in both legs. Danielle Codrington is having an especially difficult pregnancy causing serious concern for her and baby Denzel. Danielle is mother of Keeva who had severe gastrointestinal allergies. Keeva is improving but may still need repair of her esophagus. Laura Vanberg is doing better, as she made the effort to come to church this morning, using assistance from her walker, she was in good spirits, still has pain and discomfort, but improving daily after her knee replacement surgery. Maryanne Morgenstern reported that her granddaughter, Seeley Christman, is at home now, and much better.

Community Living:

West Park Village: Inez Oberg

Minnesota State Prison System: Rob Larson

Local Youth Serving in the military: Sergeant Riley Barta deployed to Romania, Dan Johnson deployed to Iraq; Taylor Green deployed in the Asian Pacific Fleet, Jacob Wagenaar, Tucker Wilson, Brooke Nebel Bohrer, and Brandon Bohrer. Please keep these soldiers in your prayers that they may return safely home. *Thank you for your service to our great country!*

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers



- 13 Samantha Reynolds
- 13 Buckley Reynolds
- 16 Clinton Byxbe
- 23 Micah Oberg



- 21 Gene & Dianne Lundhagen
- 26 Mark & Maryann Morgenstern
- 30 Rob & Abbey Emmons

LENTEN TRADITIONS

Much like a school year or a company's fiscal year differs from our calendar year, there is also a church year that includes seasons and festivals commemorated by Christians. Because Christmas and Easter are such important festivals for the church, this calendar includes special seasons to prepare for these festivals. The season of preparation for Christmas is called Advent and the season of preparation for Easter is called Lent.

Lent is a forty day season, but Sundays are not counted toward the forty, so this results in the first day of Lent being 46 days before Easter, which is called Ash Wednesday. On Ash Wednesday, many Christians gather to receive the Lord's Supper and allow themselves to be marked with ashes on the forehead to remind them of their failure to keep God's commands and that the result is death.

Contrary to many misconceptions, Lent is not intended to be a season of mourning for Jesus' death or a season of misery or despair for Christians. Instead, it is a season where Christians are encouraged to pay special attention to remembering all that Jesus has done for them by becoming human, dying by crucifixion, and rising to life after three days.

Part of this focus includes an emphasis on repentance which means to turn away from the desire for sinful things and toward trusting in Jesus. Another common misconception about Lent is that it is the only time that Christians focus on repentance and remembering Jesus' death. These two things are always focal points in Christianity, but in Lent, they receive special emphasis as they are remembered in preparation to celebrate Easter.

Because of the focus on repentance in Lent, fasting has been a very common practice throughout history. The most intense form of fasting is to refrain

from eating or drinking anything except for water for a period of time, but typical Lenten fasting only includes giving up certain types of food or giving up food for certain portions of the day. Historically, the most common type of fasting for Lent has been to give up meat to various degrees. This could be as simple as giving up beef one day a week or as drastic as eating a basically vegan diet for the entire Lenten season.

In modern times, this fasting has often expressed itself differently. Catholics and Lutherans especially, but many Protestants as well, will give up something which they enjoy during the season of Lent, such as chocolate, coffee, sugar, or television. However, this is not intended to be a sacrifice to make up for sins or to earn God's kindness. Instead, giving up a favorite luxury serves as a reminder to remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us by dying for sin. Celebrations like Carnival or *Mardi Gras* originally began as people enjoyed these favorite things one last time before giving them up for Lent.

Other Lenten traditions in the church include giving up more joyful parts of the Divine Service or Mass, such as certain songs or the word "Alleluia." In the past, some churches have even stopped using their organ or other musical instruments for the entire season of Lent.

The intention of Lent and of each of these Lenten traditions is never that they be



proached as a requirement to satisfy church rules or



Emmanuel Lutheran Church
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We have a mission . . .

Emmanuel Lutheran is
a welcoming church in a rural
community, called by God
to joyful worship
caring relationships and
loving service.

We have a vision . . .

“We will follow God’s plan for us
to grow in faith, family,
and community.”

elcshepherd.org – elcshepherd@gmail.com



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