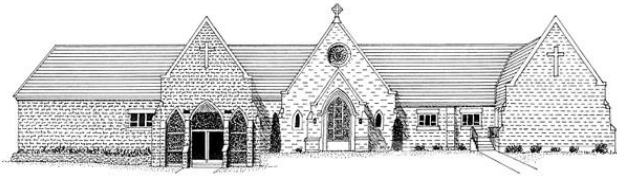


THE MESSENGER



Monthly news for Emmanuel Lutheran Church - Menominee, Michigan

JULY

2020



Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the 14th Street Parking Lot, weather permitting. We worship God as we socially distance. The worship service will continue to be broadcast via Facebook Livestream for those who choose to worship virtually.

FROM THE PASTOR...

It Won't Happen! (*or so we thought!*)

Speed: “What can be more palpably absurd than the prospect held out of locomotives traveling twice as fast as stagecoaches?” (*The Quarterly Review*, 1825)

Television: “While theoretically and technically television may be feasible, commercially and financially, I consider it an impossibility, a development of which we need not waste time dreaming.” (*Lee DeForest, scientist and inventor, 1926*)

Transportation: “As a means of rapid transit, aerial navigation could not begin to compete with the railroad.” (William Baxter, Jr., *Popular Science*, 1901)

Automobiles: “The ordinary ‘horseless carriage’ is at present a luxury for the wealthy; and although its price will probably fall in the near future, it will never, of course, come into as common use as the bicycle.” (*The Literary Digest*, 1889)

While our 21st century culture is constantly in flux and changing, those changes have become much more pronounced in recent months. Since the dawn of the COVID-19 outbreak, terms like “essential business” and “essential worker” have been born, with varying degrees of definition and approval. “Social distancing” and “virtual learning” and the like have assumed the prominent places in being the new norm. The Black Lives Matter movement has many Americans engaging differently or questioning United States history. There is no doubt that the upheaval of recent months has changed who we are as Americans.

And, as you are all well aware, the church has been affected greatly as well. While there is no date yet set as to when we will gather to worship in our sanctuary, I recently met with our Worship Committee to begin to put together a plan of what that will look like. I won't get into details of our meeting at this point in time, but the reality of gathering together under the same roof will undoubtedly look and feel very different from what it did the last time we were able to be together.

We are grieving; we are grieving what we have lost and what may never have again, in terms of both culture and church. But, there is also the

opportunity in the midst of all of this to continue to grow and adapt, as people of God, and as the church in whole. When the shutdown first hit we were fortunate to already have the Facebook Live medium in place so that we were able to make the transition with minimal bumps in the road. While this was meant to be nothing more than a bridge to when we would resume normal worship, one thing that I've learned as I have talked to people, is that many persons who were not actively connected to the church prior to this shutdown have now reconnected to Emmanuel via the "virtual community." That is something that we should not ignore. The church has a history of "re-inventing" itself approximately every 500 years, with the last being the Protestant Reformation of 1517.

It means that if the pattern continues, that we're due and that we may best serve ourselves by simply getting out of the way of how the Holy Spirit will blow through our church and our congregation. It means that our eyes, ears, hearts and minds must be open to where the Spirit is calling us to be and who the Spirit is calling us to be. I, for one, am very excited about what that may look like, though I could offer nothing more than miniscule glimpses at this time.

Don't get me wrong – I look forward to us being together in indoor worship and working side-by-side with you again, doing the work that Christ has called us to, and, hopefully, it will be very soon. That intimacy simply cannot be replicated in the virtual experience. For now, though, honoring the safety of all Emmanuel's members, we will continue with the Parking Lot worship on Sunday mornings and slowly begin to gather in small groups in the church as is necessary and relevant. But it doesn't mean that we should ignore these other outlets either. For some, this may be their only way of being connected with the church and the impact that it has on their life could very well be what God is calling the church to be in 2020 and beyond.

So, in these dizzying days, let us pray for direction and guidance. Then, just as important, let us be silent so that we can truly hear God's voice in response. The direction may not be as clear as we would like, or even what we would like; but that, my friends, is where faith comes in. Let us be the faithful people of God that we have always been, and let our words and our actions reflect that as we navigate through these strange days, trusting in our Great Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

In Christ,
Pastor Mark

JULY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Church office hours are Monday – Thursday, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. If you need to conduct church business outside of these times, please contact Pastor Mark at (906) 424-0003.
- Parking Lot Worship (weather permitting) Sundays, July 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th at 9:00 a.m. You are encouraged to bring your own chair, but chairs will be provided for those who need them. If it rains or the weather makes it impermissible to gather, the service will continue to be Facebook Livestreamed each Sunday.
- Safe Distancing Holy Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, July 12th during the 9:00 worship service. Drive-through Safe Distancing Communion will then be available for those who wish to receive it from 9:45 am – 10:15 am at the 14th Street building entrance.
- Virtual Bible School. Tuesday, July 28th – Thursday, July 30th. (Information for this event found on page 5)
- Emmanuel has tentatively set a date for the church picnic for Sunday, August 30th. If the picnic is able to happen, more information as to time, location, and accompanying events will be shared in the August Messenger.

EMMANUEL BUDGET NEWS

As of May 31, 2020

*Your Contributions to the General Fund	\$103,073.44
*Your Approved Budget Amount	\$110,584.96

VIRTUAL **VBS**

VACATION **BIBLE SCHOOL**

July 28th, 29th, & 30th 11:00-11:30 a.m.
Livestreamed on Emmanuel's Facebook page.

Planning is underway for this summer's Vacation Bible School. However, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we will be diving into a totally different way of doing VBS.

Each day we will present live through our church Facebook page, a Bible adventure lesson and a craft demonstration. Individual packets of crafts and other handouts will be made available to those children who are registered for VBS. These packets will be available for pickup at the church - see pickup dates and times below.

If your child is unable to participate in our live stream events, videos of each day's event will be available on our church website so they can be viewed at your convenience.

Here are a few important things to know:

- * Virtual VBS is open to all elementary school-aged children. (Please note that parents or older children may need to help younger children with the crafts).

- * Parent letters and registration forms were mailed out the week of June 15th. Deadline to register for VBS was July 1st. If you missed the deadline, we can still take registrations up to Sunday, July 5th but no later to ensure crafts for the children arrive in time for the pickup dates.

- * Craft packet pick-up dates are Wednesday, July 22nd and Thursday, July 23rd from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in the church back entranceway. Each packet will be labeled with your child's name.

ELECTRONIC SIGN

We are so very close to having the necessary funds to install and landscape around the electronic sign! If you would like to contribute to this project, please contact the church office. The sign is purchased and received and ready to go. The plan was to have the sign installed this spring, but due to the COVID-19 outbreak, we've had to postpone getting this completed. The hope is now to ensure that the sign is installed by this fall.

FALL PROGRAMMING

Conversations are happening now regarding our fall programming (Sunday School/Confirmation/Bible Studies/etc.). More information will be available in the August Messenger. Thank you for your continued patience, prayers, and contributions as we continue to work through this pandemic and ensure that our building will be as safe as possible when we return to it.

LIFELONG FAITH FORMATION

The Northern Great Lakes Synod is launching a new series of classes for adults who want to increase their knowledge and understanding of the Bible, church history, Lutheran Theology, world religions, and more. Classes will meet via Zoom weekly for 60 to 90 minutes for four to eight weeks beginning the week of September 8th. If you are interested in being a part of this venture, please contact Pastor Mark for more information.

We the People: Steward our democracy

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Two sentences from the Declaration of Independence express the true hierarchy that orders our lives. At the top is God, our creator. Human beings are next, and we create government to secure our rights. So, the hierarchy is: God, people, government.

This marks a dramatic innovation in Western thought. For centuries monarchs had been understood to rule “by divine right,” so the accepted hierarchy was: God, monarchy (government), people.

We celebrate the Declaration’s signing day, July 4, 1776, with fireworks, family cookouts and parades. This year’s Fourth of July comes in the wake of Covid-19 and protests over the death George Floyd -- events that have brought to light many deep-seated problems.

Amid economic instability, rising inequality in wealth and healthcare, disparities in criminal justice and other issues, many are asking, “Who does the government *really* serve?” The Declaration reminds us that we’re in charge, and we have the power to make changes to direct the path our government is on.

It would be wise for God’s people to mark the Fourth of July, 2020, with deep reflection and renewed commitment to working to ensure a government that reflects our values and serves all of God’s people.

Why is this a stewardship issue? Christian stewardship is the discipline of taking care of and using wisely all that God has given us – whether it be money, health, relationships, or even governments. God has entrusted us with a vibrant democracy. It’s up to us to take care of it.

--Rob Blezard

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SUNDAY MORNINGS AT EMMANUEL

Online Worship 9:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on our Facebook page

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Mrs. Patti Treptow

Church Secretary

Mrs. Judy Raygo

Custodian- inside Mrs. Carol Parrish

Custodian – outside Mr. Lee Parrish



We are a congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America