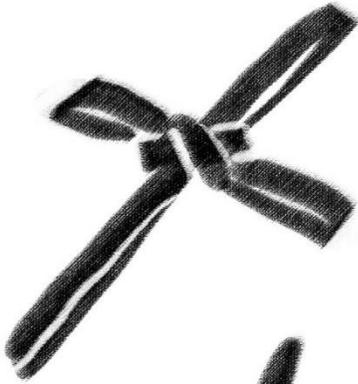


Ash Wednesday



The
Echoes
Emanuel
Lutheran
Church

March 2014

ASH WEDNESDAY MARKS THE BEGINNING OF LENT

ABOUT US

My Grace is Sufficient...

by Pastor Stan Niemi

I read a passage from 2 Corinthians 12 for Church Council devotions last night. It was a passage tied to my present personal experience. I have



been in a heart arrhythmia for some time and now discovered my thyroid is producing too much hormone. Could the two be related? Yes, but this letter to you isn't about a doctor's diagnosis, but about my situation and your situation as a result of my current circumstances. I've told the council I'd be leaving Emanuel after February 23rd worship and Sunday School. I do so with a heavy heart for my own situation and health, but also for your uncertain future. I am leaving because of my health and it has

nothing to do with Emanuel. You, the people of Emanuel, have been extremely supportive of me during my year of ministry.

Bishop Mark Holmerud has assured me that he will seek to provide pastoral leadership for Emanuel during the remaining interim time. You have competent and faithful leaders on the council to oversee the next steps in the life of the congregation. Above all, God is still alive and very well while still at the ship we call Emanuel. I believe you are in a good position to complete this interim time and engage a full time pastor to re-energize new directions in Christ's ministry at and around Emanuel.

There are a number of areas in ministry that may now be expanded and enhanced in my leaving. One of those areas I pray will be with the

Emanuel is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Our Mission:
Sharing Christ's transforming grace with everyone.

Church Office:
Phone: 209-523-4531
Fax: 209-523-3643

Church Office Hours
Monday 8am–1pm
Tuesday 8am–11am
Wednesday 8am–1pm
Thursday 8am–11am
Friday Closed

Interim Pastor:
209-523-4531
pastor@emanuellutheran.org

Laura Marquez, Day Care
Director 209-549-0672
daycare@emanuellutheran.org

Paula Braxton, Secretary
209-523-4531
secretary@emanuellutheran.org

youth of Emanuel. They have been neglected during Roberta's absence and my time. The strengthening of youth ministry could be a great healing balm for Emanuel during the remaining interim time and continue into the future. It was with a heavy heart that I spent my last Tuesday evening with the confirmands. I believe they are the nicest group of confirmands I've ever been a part of in my years of ministry.

I don't know what the next months will hold for me. I hope to get back some reasonable health baseline and then begin a new interim time. All the future possibility of ministry is in God's hands as usual. I'm simply more aware of my limitations and my need for God's intervention at this particular time. My prayer is that God's grace will be sufficient for me and for you.

Pastor Stan K. Niemi

Therefore, to keep me from being too elated, a thorn was given to me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

2 Corinthians 12:7b-9

OUR VISION

Emanuel's vision is to be loving, supportive, and welcoming as we reach out in service and in witness to our neighborhood and the city beyond. We share a passion to nurture children, youth, and young adults.

We aspire to grow in numbers and in Christian maturity in order to minister more effectively to a larger congregation and to a changing community.

We seek always to be led by God's spirit and to respond joyfully to God's desire for our congregation.

A Note From the New Editor

by Mike Epting

I was surprised to learn that Pastor Stan prepared last month's Echoes. I had been away on a one-month vacation and felt a bit out of touch. I knew that Debbie Van Diepen's plate was full to overflowing and that she needed somebody to step up, but it seemed wrong for that someone to be our Pastor.

I fully retired just before Christmas, so it felt right for me to take on this task. Debbie and Paula will help me gather the information that will hopefully make this newsletter accurate and useful, but I'll need your help, too.

Our goal is to get this in your hands via email or printed copy before the first day of each month, so that the articles will not be overcome by events by the time you read them. Obviously this won't happen unless you get information to Debbie, Paula, or me in timely manner. I recommend that you pass on your inputs as soon as you have them and don't wait for an artificial deadline.

The lead story of this issue will, hopefully, be old news to you, but as I write this I'm still grieving. Pastor Stan's departure will bring even more changes and I'm hoping we can use the Echoes as one way to keep us all informed and engaged.

I welcome constructive criticism!

ABOUT MIKE

Mike is a retired electronics engineer. He was known among his peers as an excellent writer, but he is quite fond of saying: "In the Kingdom of the Blind, the one-eyed man is king."



Emanuel Returns to Single Sunday Worship Service

by Sue Wilke

At the recommendation of the Natural Church Development Committee, with the approval of the Council and with the blessings of the Bishop, Emanuel Lutheran Church returns to one service beginning March 9.

There are several reasons for this change. First, we must now come together as one congregation. Having one service will facilitate finding pulpit supply pastors and even an interim pastor. Having one service that fills the church presents a better image than two services that are more than half empty, helping to make Emanuel a church that a Pastor will want to serve.

This change will require some compromise. The new service will be at 9:30 am and the service format will alternate between the current 11 am traditional service and the less formal 8:30 service.

This is a positive move that gives everyone a chance to make new friends and get reacquainted with old ones. It doubles the number of ushers, lay assistants, communion assistants, and acolytes available to serve. It means we all get to enjoy the choir and the choir may possibly grow, too. Children who have been attending the late service now have the opportunity to attend Children's Church. Everyone can fellowship together over coffee and goodies after the service.



Obviously, we must work out some issues, such as whether adult classes meet before or after the 9:30 service. Please stay positive about this

change and help make Emanuel attractive to visitors as well as Pastors looking for a call to this area. If we meet our challenges head on and look for the good in

this situation, we will be a place that says, "Welcome," to anyone who walks through our doors.

Put God First

by Kristine Kraft

Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God. (Leo Buscaglia)

Visualize a jar of rice and another jar of walnuts. The jar of rice represents our LIFE and our many activities. Living requires commitment and time. We're a son or daughter, a parent, husband or wife. We work to support our families. We need to exercise and to maintain our house and vehicles. We have pets, animals, or property. We need to relax, travel, watch sports or television, and use our telephone, cell phone, or email. There isn't time for everything! We need more time, but we're only given 24 hours in each day.

Whoa! Wait! What about God? Is there room left over for God? The walnuts represent activities that God wants us to undertake. God wants us to have Him in our life. Let's add some walnuts, God's activities, to

the jar that represents our LIFE. Not all of the walnuts will fit. There isn't enough room or time.



God doesn't want our leftover time. He wants our first fruits. We need to set priorities, schedule, and make time to gratefully give back to God out of the abundance of all that God has given us. God wants to be a part of our life and for us to put God first.

So, let's prioritize. Empty the rice jar and put one walnut in the jar of LIFE for each of God's activities:

- ➔ Start each day with a quiet time with God
- ➔ Read the Bible
- ➔ Pray for God's will
- ➔ Attend church on Sunday
- ➔ Join a Bible Study Group
- ➔ Join a Women's Circle
- ➔ Volunteer for one of Emanuel's Ministries
- ➔ Use the gifts or talents that God has given us
- ➔ Call absent members and tell them we miss them
- ➔ Take communion to a shut-in member
- ➔ Help with coffee hour
- ➔ Help with a Sunday lesson with Emanuel's young children
- ➔ Help with Emanuel's Youth Group activities
- ➔ Help with Family Promise

Add the rest of the walnuts; God calls us to give our time to many ministries. We have now put all of God's activities first. Now add the rice, LIFE's activities. Wow they both fit! If we put God first, there is plenty of room for LIFE's activities and God's activities.



February Council Notes

Submitted by Debbie Van Diepen

Pastor Stan

Due to health challenges Pastor Stan tendered his resignation as Interim Pastor. With deep regret the Council accepted his resignation.

Suzanne Wilke contacted Bishop Holmerud, who will work with us to facilitate obtaining a new interim. In the meantime, we will have pulpit supply pastors for Sunday mornings. Pr. Roger Lee is available if emergency pastoral care is needed until we have the new Interim.

Call Committee Report

Council approved the Church Profile and Job Description for the Pastor as created by the Call Committee. This has been submitted to the Synod office. It will still probably be 4 to 6 months before we call a Pastor.

Natural Church Development Committee (NCD)

NCD recommended that a single service be held on Sundays rather than two. The Worship Team agreed, and Worship hours will be changed to a single 9:30 am service beginning Sunday, March 9. The Worship survey will be repeated in 6 months.

Daycare Report

Good financial standing continues. Daycare anticipates that it will remain financially in the 'black' through spring. January attendance average was 39 students.

Beginning July 1, teachers will receive \$1/hour increase and aides will receive \$2/hour increase to bring them up to Minimum Wage requirements. Bob Reuter reminded us that with wage increases Emanuel

will also realize a payroll tax increase. A Daycare fee increase will be enacted on July 1 rather than in advance due to a concern of loss of clients before the law goes into effect.

Marilyn Rowland will be organizing a snack food drive. Donations are tax-deductible whether monetary or goods.

Pledges

General Fund as of 1/22/2014	
22 pledge units increased their pledge by \$8,800	\$56,159
18 pledges stayed the same	\$47,589
11 new pledges	\$16,680
7 units decreased pledge by \$1,950	\$9,330
58 Total Pledges	\$129,758

Last year's total adjusted pledges were \$129,374 (56 pledge units).

9 pledge units who last year pledged \$23,146 did not turn in a pledge. This includes people who have moved away, deceased, or transferred.

Building Fund as of 1/22/2014	
12 pledge units increased their pledge by \$1,808	\$10,533
18 pledges stayed the same	\$29,609
10 new pledges	\$6,450
12 units decreased pledge by \$3,864	\$8,770
51 Total Pledges	\$55,362

Last year's adjusted pledge was \$59,078 (51 pledge units)

9 pledge units who last year pledged \$8,110 have not turned in a pledge.

Endowment

As of 1/31 the total value with Accrued Income is \$197,670.75

Property

Completed projects include cement work to correct tree root damage; light retro-fitting, and reverse gate entrance to Daycare play area

Projects in planning state:

- ➔ Create concrete walkway between Preschool classrooms and Infant/Toddler Daycare beneath the eaves of the building and install gate for access.
- ➔ Modify fencing at west side of Daycare main entrance to eliminate "blind area."
- ➔ Correct kitchen outlet

Worship

2014 Lenten services include Ash Wednesday (March 5, 7 pm), Maundy Thursday (April 17, 7 pm), and Good Friday (April 18, 7 pm). There will be no mid-week Lenten services this year.

Outreach

The MJC Study Room has had very low attendance since the reopening of the MJC Library. Therefore the Study Room will close effective Monday, February 24. The Outreach Ministry will be working on other ways we can make a difference in our community. Thanks to all who hosted the study room.

Family/Youth

Plans for the Easter Egg hunt, assisted by youth, are in progress.

March News

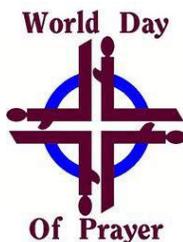
WELCA's General Meeting



WELCA meets Sunday, March 2 at 9:45 am in Luther Hall. All women of Emanuel are invited to attend and discuss and decide the future of the WELCA at Emanuel.

World Day of Prayer Friday, March 7, 2014

World Day of Prayer is a global, ecumenical movement of Christian women joined together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday of March. Once again Emanuel is opening the sanctuary that day, March 7, for prayer. Please come and pray for as short or for as long a time as you would like. Also, please invite your friends, family and anyone you know in the community to come and pray in our sanctuary that day.



We hope to have the sanctuary open from 10 to 4. However, since the sanctuary cannot be unattended while it is open, volunteers are needed to be here during the event. The hours of the event are dependent upon having volunteers here. If you can be here please sign the sign-up sheet in the narthex or contact a member of the worship team: Kathleen Reuter, Bill Reinheimer or Paula Kroeze.

Thank you, the Worship Team.

DID YOU KNOW THE SYNOD OWNS A RESOURCE CENTER -- FOR YOUR USE?

For over twenty years, the Sierra Pacific Synod has owned and operated a resource center that provides a variety of materials for the pastors and the people of our churches. For most of those years, it was housed at Hope Lutheran Church in



Fresno. About two years ago, it was relocated to the Lutheran Campus Ministry building at 2311 E. Shaw Avenue, Fresno. Resource Center materials can be easily reviewed by searching its online catalog:

www.resourcecenterspselca.org

Resources in this free lending library cover a wide range of categories and topics. You may email rspelca@pacbell.net, or use the phone (559-345-2725) to ask questions or learn more. We welcome your personal or group use.

Circle Meetings

Rebecca circle meets Thursday, March 20, 2014, 1:30 pm, in the home of Lois Silva. Our study will be from the March issue of The Gather Magazine: In Good Company: Stories of Biblical Women, Session 7 Daughter, An Honest Virgin.

Leah Circle meets March 13, 7 pm at Lisa Poston's home: 524 Cormorant Dr., Modesto (578-2776).

Lydia Circle meets Monday, March 17, 7:30 pm at Marilyn Rowland's home, 1610 Idylwood Ct.

College Area Neighborhood Alliance (CANA)



The Emanuel Lutheran Outreach Ministry would like to reach out to the community around us and those who share space in our church. The College Area Neighborhood Alliance (CANA) is one of those groups. CANA is working hard to make our neighborhood a safer, friendlier and cleaner area in which to live, to work and to worship. CANA holds all of their meetings at Emanuel Lutheran. We would like to start by extending a hand to their efforts of keeping our area clean. Please come and help if you can. Bring gloves, they will provide bags to put trash in.

CANA Virginia Corridor Clean-Up:

- ➔ Saturday, March 8th
- ➔ 8:30 to 10:30 am
- ➔ Meet at the playground, corner of Morris and Virginia

See you there !!

Early Communion Training

This training was scheduled to start on March 9, but must be postponed. The sessions will be rescheduled after we have a pastor.

PFLAG Social Night

PFLAG has extended an invitation to Emanuel to join them for their Tuesday, March 18th Crockpot Potluck and game night. This is a great opportunity for Emanuel to become more familiar with PFLAG members and mission as well as have a good time and a good meal.

The outreach ministry team encourages you to sign up in the narthex and join this outreach activity.



Stanislaus Family Justice Center

The 3rd annual Art of Justice Celebration and Fundraiser will be March 27, 5 to 8 pm, at 1625 I Street, Modesto. Please join us for this child-inspired art show and sale. The event includes a silent auction; wine, beverages, and appetizers, and an opportunity to meet the artists. Help break the cycle of violence by buying your tickets online at www.StanislausFamilyJustice.org or call Cindy Schneider at 525-5134. Don't miss this truly unique event.



Endowment Fund

We now have an **Endowment Fund Memorial Book**. The book lists all who contributed to the fund since it was started in 2011, including bequests, memorials, and donations. The memorial book is available in the narthex for members to view.

This fund provides income from dividends and interest. The fund is designed to provide funds in perpetuity for the use of the church. Except in extreme emergencies, the fund's principal cannot be used for ordinary operating expenses. Please consider including the Emanuel Lutheran Church Endowment fund in your estate planning. For more information about the fund, contact Robert Reuter, Bill Reinheimer, or Pat Norquist.

March Birthdays

Birthday Blessing Sunday is
March 16

Sergio Alvarado
March 1

Jack Klenz
March 12

Zach Cline
March 1

Jerry Luttermann
March 12

Dennis Crenwelge
March 1

Jim Barton
March 13

David Holtz
March 20

Sheri Hoover
March 28

Sarah Shank
March 11

Anna Hooper
March 13

Addie Hoover
March 21

Dennis Strand
March 28

Garry Hayes
March 12

Beth Rokaitis
March 13

Russ Klenz
March 23

Virginia Dall
March 31

Charlie Klenz
March 12

Marilyn Rowland
March 19

Cecelia Olives
March 25



March Prayer Requests

Praise Report:

- Mary Dieterich would like to express heartfelt thanks to God and to Emanuel family for all your prayers for Robert Dieterich's healing. He is now enjoying better health!

New Prayer Requests:

- Esther Johnson—healing (Crawford)
- Geraldine Walton—health, well-being and healing (Hollmann)
- Linda and Dave—health (Watkins)

Our Members:

- Drew Shank
- Ben Knoll
- Lori Knoll
- Lee Santana

Our Homebound Members:

- Harvey Hardel
- Florence Broden
- Kay Altmas
- Shelda Fritts

Our Family:

- Steve & Nancy Jeske (B. Norquist)
- Melody Saldivar (Saldivar)
- Joyce Shockley (Nelson)
- Sharon (Owen)
- Sarah Robertson (Murray)
- James Sullivan (Hollmann)
- John Smith (P. Smith)
- Marsha Schlipman (Nelson)
- Jack Peterson (Peterson)

Our Friends:

- Devon (Fritts)
- Roger Warner (Schmidt)
- Barbara (Owen)
- Diane O'Roerk (Murray)
- Rosie Egesdal (Nelson)
- Jeanne (Watkins)
- John Turner (Turner)
- Nancy (L. Owen)
- Tim O'Roerk (Murray)
- Bud Stone & family (Reinheimer)
- Marc Weiss & family (Reinheimer)
- Keith & Lenny (Schmidt)
- Claudette Henrie (Wilke)
- Jennifer (Watkins)
- Donna Thayer (Peterson)

We Pray for Peace in the Middle East, and for all those serving in our armed forces.

- Ryan Dangerfield, USAF in Lakenheath Air Base, England and Joey Sabel, USMC in North Carolina (Marilyn & Chuck Rowland's grandson & grandson-in-law)
- Timothy Kramer in Afghanistan (Megan Armes' brother)
- Ryan Powell (grandson of Yvonne Troedson) USN, Connecticut.



Emanuel Calendar of Events March 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:30 am Worship: Rejoice and Sing 9:45 am WELCA General Meeting 11:00 am Worship: Word & Sacrament	3 7:30 pm Women's Bible Study	4 6:00 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm PFLAG Meeting	5 Ash Wednesday 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship	6 9:30 am Bible Study	7 Office Closed 10:00 am World Day of Prayer	8 8:30 am CANA Virginia Corridor Clean-up
9 9:30 am Worship Service	10 7:30 pm Women's Bible Study @ Schroeder	11 6:00 pm Confirmation Class	12 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Ministry Meeting	13 9:30 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Leah Circle	14 Office Closed	15
16 9:30 am Worship Service	17 7:30 pm Lydia Circle	18 5:00 pm PFLAG Crockpot Potluck & Social 6:00 pm Confirmation Class	19 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:00 pm Council Mtg.	20 9:30 am Bible Study 1:30 pm Rebecca Circle	21 Office Closed	22
23 Family Promise 9:30 am Worship Service	24 Family Promise 7:30 pm Women's Bible Study @ Schroeder	25 Family Promise 6:00 pm Confirmation Class	26 Family Promise 7:00 am Men's Bible Study	27 Family Promise 9:30 am Bible Study 5:00 pm Art of Justice Celebration and Fundraiser 7:00 pm Priscilla Circle	28 Family Promise Office Closed	29 Family Promise
30 9:30 am Worship Service	31 7:30 pm Women's Bible Study @ Schroeder					