



*Inside: All Saint's Day  
Trunk or Treat  
Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration  
Servant of the Month:  
Karryn Salonen*

**85**  
*& forward  
in  
faith*

# Emanuel Lutheran Church

*Our Mission: To share Christ's unconditional love with everyone.*

# Greetings from Pastor Lyn

*ARISE SHINE you people!*

Advent is underway and so is the mad rush to Christmas! It's always interesting to me that Christmas decorations go up and stores are filled with merchandise earlier and earlier every year. As a culture we seem to need more and more Christmas earlier and earlier hoping, perhaps, that the tinsel and bright colors, the smells and the bells, will mask the chaos of daily living. I read somewhere recently that it is good to decorate early for a holiday that brings you joy. The activity actually can raise the endorphins in one's brain and make you feel better. I don't know about that – maybe for some, but for most of us the joy of Christmas isn't found in the decorations, the food, the carols, or the presents. Our joy comes in celebrating once more the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.



*Arise, Shine you people!*

Wednesday Advent Suppers begin December 4 at 5:30 pm. Holden Evening Prayer, a short meditative service, begins at 7:00 pm. In between we will view and discuss around tables a DVD titled "*Light of the World*". Come early, come late, but be sure to attend! Enrich your Advent and Christmas preparations with this mid-week event.

*Arise, Shine you people!*

On December 15, a Christmas play titled "*The Not-So-Silent-Night*" will be presented during the worship hour at 9:30 am. Practice for the play will be on Saturday, Dec. 14th from 10 am to noon. There are other Advent/Christmas activities too like the Cookie Exchange on the 7th and Christmas Caroling on the 14th. Lots of opportunity to

*Arise & Shine!*

In Advent Hope,  
Pastor Lyn



Emanuel is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Sunday Worship: 9:30 am

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Website:  
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Church Office Hours:  
Monday through Thursday:  
8 am – 3 pm  
Friday 8 am – 2 pm

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Laura Marquez, Day Care Director  
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## 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 people in all stages and circumstances of life.

We, as disciples of Christ, minister to our changing community in challenging cultural times.

God is calling us to joyfully follow the Holy Spirit in ministry to others.

# All Saints Day, November 3



There were far too many candles this year as we specifically remembered:

Charles (Van) Allen  
Violet Andrews  
Linda Berg  
Vera Eden  
Gloria Hoover  
Ellen Johnson  
Jill Klenz

Donald Lee  
David Loeffler  
Roland Loeffler  
Janet (Jan) Lutterman  
O'Shea Mauldin  
Gabriele Rude  
Geraldine Walton

We added personal prayers for our many individual special saints.

This month's cover features the new altar décor provided by the Sanctuary Arts Team. These decorations were also present for the Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration, so our visitors were able to enjoy them.



# Care Cupboard Thanksgiving



The Outreach Ministry asked for special donations of Thanksgiving-related food items for the Care Cupboard and you certainly came through. The cupboard was far from bare! We hope our MJC clients had a great holiday, thanks to you.



# Endowment Fund

Submitted by Robert Reuter, Treasurer

*This article is a follow-up to a recent "Temple Talk".*

The Endowment Fund began with a couple of bequests and donations from members and some additional memorials. A brokerage account was set up so these funds could be invested in various instruments, such as stocks, ETF shares, and bond funds. The earnings would be divided between capital expenses (repairs, mortgage payment if needed, and new major capital investments), ministries, tithing to the synod, and reinvestment within the fund. Only earnings from the Endowment Fund are used for these categories. The principal remains within the endowment account as well as any reinvestment funds. The fund earns an average of about \$1,200 per month.

Since its inception in September 2011, the endowment fund has been instrumental in helping pay for repairing the damage from two termite attacks, a water break, damage to a door from a break-in of the sanctuary, and installation of new security doors. Earnings from the fund are available for emergencies and special occasions that are not in the budget.

The Endowment Fund can always use donations, memorials and bequests. Because the fund is held in a brokerage account, it is possible to make donations by transferring appreciated stock directly to the fund's account. The gift is valued for tax purposes at the stock price when donated, and there will be no capital gains tax on the difference between the buy price and the donated price. Your accountant can help you in this regard.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity and support of all that Emanuel Lutheran Church contributes to our church family, our community and our world in the name of our Lord.



Pat Smith made a new  
Bulletin Board!

# Trunk or Treat

Photos by Sue Wilke

We had a superb turnout of decorated cars (and people). We gave treats to an estimated 50 children and painted some faces, too.



# Trunk or Treat, continued



# Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration

This year, the annual celebration was held at Emanuel. Many people thanked us for our hospitality and our guests filled the sanctuary. The event itself was incredibly moving and we were blessed to be part of it. These photos demonstrate the breadth of the presentations, which were uniformly excellent.



# Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration, cont.

Here is the closing liturgy that we read at the end of the celebration. As you can see, it is taken from several different faith traditions, each capturing the theme of the evening: kindness to all, including the strangers among us:



When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them;  
They must be treated as your native born. Love them as yourself, for you were once foreigners in Egypt.

*Leviticus 19:33-34 (The Torah)*

(God) denies none that come unto him, both black and white, young and old, bond and free, male and female

And he remembers those, whether out of the church or in the church, for all are alike unto God.

*Alma 1:30 & 2 Nephi 26:33 (adapted: The Book of Mormon)*

For he is our peace, who has made the two groups one  
And has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.

*Ephesians 2:14 (New Testament)*

When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf of grain, do not return to get it;  
Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

*Deuteronomy 24:19 (The Torah)*

Reviled is anyone who withholds justice from the foreigner

*Deuteronomy 27:19 (The Torah)*

For I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger.

*Job 29:16 (Holy Bible)*

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces toward east or west in prayer, but righteousness is the quality of the one who believes in God and the prophets

And gives his wealth, in spite of his love for it, to the kinsfolk, to the orphans, to the poor, and to the wayfarer.

*Surah 2:177 (The Holy Quran)*

I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink;  
I was a stranger and you invited me in.

*Matthew 25:35 (New Testament)*

And do not forget to show hospitality to strangers...

For by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

*Hebrews 13:2 (New Testament)*

# Constitution Revision

Submitted by Mike Epting

The ELCA has revised its Model Constitution for Congregations, as approved by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. We are asked, as an ELCA congregation, to approve these changes to our constitution at our annual meeting on January 12. Most of the revisions are grammatical in nature. The substantive changes have to do with separating from the ELCA, an event that we hope would never happen. Nevertheless, the constitution spells out some details surrounding such a possibility.

It has always been possible that a church might dissolve or cease to exist or be removed from the ELCA for disciplinary reasons. The amendment specifies that the synod would take charge of the property of the congregation in such a case. It has also always been possible for a congregation to leave the ELCA. The revision specifies that such a move would require a two-thirds vote of members present at two special meetings of the congregation, held at least 3 months apart. If the resolution fails to get a 2/3 vote at either meeting, the change specifies a six months wait before another attempt. Before this revision a single meeting was required, so the change requires the congregation to be very certain they want to leave. One other clarification in the revision is that if the congregation leaves the ELCA voluntarily, the church's property does not pass to the synod.

Copies of the proposed amendments are now available in the Narthex and the office for you to take and examine. They will also be available at the meeting itself.

# Outreach Christmas

Submitted by Rose Epting



Our Sock Tree and our Giving Tree will be up in the Narthex starting December 1. For the Sock Tree, socks and underwear are needed for the Gospel Mission. For the Giving Tree, there are three families with children that we want to help. There will be tags on the tree for each child. Please take a tag and bring back a corresponding gift, wrapped with the tag on the outside, by December 22.



# I Believe...in What?

Submitted by Kathleen Reuter

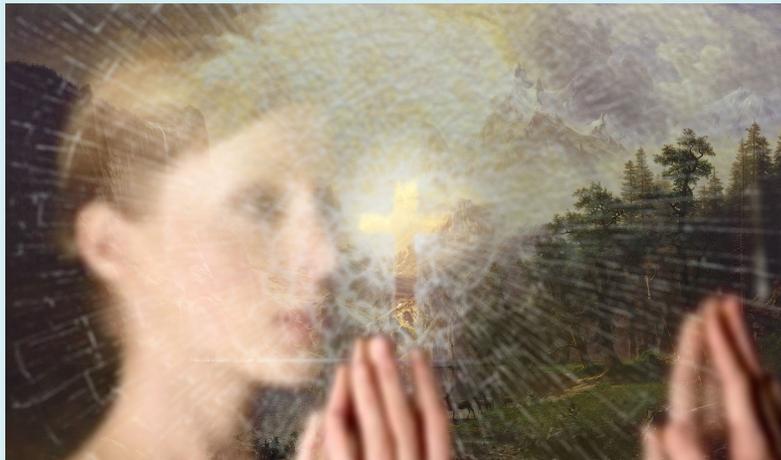
Recently, after watching a few episodes of *How the Universe Was Made* on the Science channel, I got to thinking about what really is out there. Oh sure, sun, moon and stars, and galaxies and black holes. But what is after all that? I have read a little about the Big Bang Theory of the creation of – what? Space? And now there is a rethinking about the Big Bang. The original theory was that the universe was once compressed into nothing and then suddenly exploded into being, and it is still expanding until one day it will just as suddenly implode. Or something. Only now that theory is being re-examined.

Big Bang or not, I cannot comprehend what is beyond... a mile beyond infinity, the day before or after eternity. With all the scientific wonders of our present existence, we still cannot really explain eternity or infinity. Why, even the Darwin theory of evolution is coming in for review. As we learn more about DNA, it has become clear that the chicken and egg conundrum (which came first?) is at play on the DNA level as well. Apparently, DNA needs certain elements in order to be created, but those elements are created by DNA.



How would we explain cell phones or flights to the moon to the people of Abraham's day? It would have to be in words and concepts that they could understand from their experience. Even today I cannot find the words to fully explain the things I know, that the Earth is flying through space circling around our Sun, and that DNA proves my relationship to my mother and my daughters. If we cannot explain it, is it any less true?

We have now entered the season of Advent. We hear again the stories about miraculous conceptions, both Elizabeth's pregnancy of John the Baptizer and Mary's pregnancy of Jesus the Christ who is God the Son. We will retell the mysteries of the life and death of Jesus; we will follow him to the tomb and then rejoice at his return from the land of the dead and his ascension to dwell for eternity with God the Father, leaving with us his advocate, God the Spirit. We will celebrate the eternal triune God,



three-in-one, who has freely offered us salvation from our sins, from the inevitable errors of our ways.

And no, I do not know how to explain all this either. But no matter: *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.* (1 Corinthians 13:12 NRSV)

# November Council Notes



Council met on November 10 at 11 am. Pastor Lyn showed us the results of a church Vitality Survey that council members had filled out in October. We discussed these results, focusing on items that scored lower than 3.5/5. All council member had concerns about specific aspects of our vitality, some more than others. In the end, though we all have hope for the future.

Bob Reuter reported that we will again submit a budget that fails to balance. This year our projected expenses exceed our projected income by \$38K. As of the meeting time, not all pledges for 2020 had been returned so a precise projection for next year was not yet available. Bob also reported that we now have two brokerage accounts, separating endowments from general fund investments.

Dennis Strand has been working on parking lot repairs that will be required. These are not included in the proposed budget, however. Bob Reuter proposed an idea to add the needed amount to our current mortgage. If the lender will agree, this would increase the term of the loan, but not increase the required monthly payments. Council authorized Bob to pursue this approach. Day Care will also pay their fair share of the repair cost. Dennis has also been working with tree trimming companies and has selected one to do the work on November 24.

The nominating committee, consisting of outgoing council members, needs to identify at least 3 additional candidates for next year's council.

Outreach will hand out Emanuel Calling Cards on WELCA Sunday. They also plan to move the couches out of the room that is now used for quilting. Both Care Cupboard and Katie's Kitchen will close while MJC is closed for the holidays.

Fellowship is planning potato bars for the Advent suppers this year. Volunteers will need to coordinate on ingredients. Additional upcoming events include Day Care 20th anniversary on Jan. 5, Emanuel's 75th anniversary on Jan. 19, and the Bishop's visit on Feb. 9.

	October Income	October Expenses	October Gain/Loss
<b>General Fund</b>	17,519	(24,886)	(7,367)
<b>Building Fund</b>	5,131	(6,929)	(1,798)
<b>Day Care</b>	24,246	(29,825)	(5,579)
<b>TOTALS</b>	46,896	(61,640)	(14,744)

## December Birthdays

### Birthday Blessing Sunday is December 15

All those celebrating their births during the month of December will receive a Birthday Blessing Prayer from their Emanuel Family. Don't miss out!



12/2 Laura Marquez

12/3 Brett Owen

12/7 Lori Skustad

12/13 Abigail Layne

12/14 Dave Henke

12/17 Lynette Crase

12/20 Paula Barton

12/20 Alexandria Hoover

12/26 Mary Martin

12/31 Richard Norquist

## Servant of the Month

Karryn Salonen is a fantastic servant of Emanuel. She has done many things for us over the years, but possibly the most visible is that she has brought her family to be a vital part of our life together. Her grandsons recently took First Communion, an event that made us all more hopeful for the future. Her son, Rick has just completed a three year council term, bringing a much-needed younger person's perspective. Karryn herself was mentioned in last month's Echoes because she quietly sponsored a symposium for clergy at Community Hospice in our name! Karryn works at this organization, which provides a vitally needed service to Modesto. It's wonderful that she brings a Christian approach to that job.

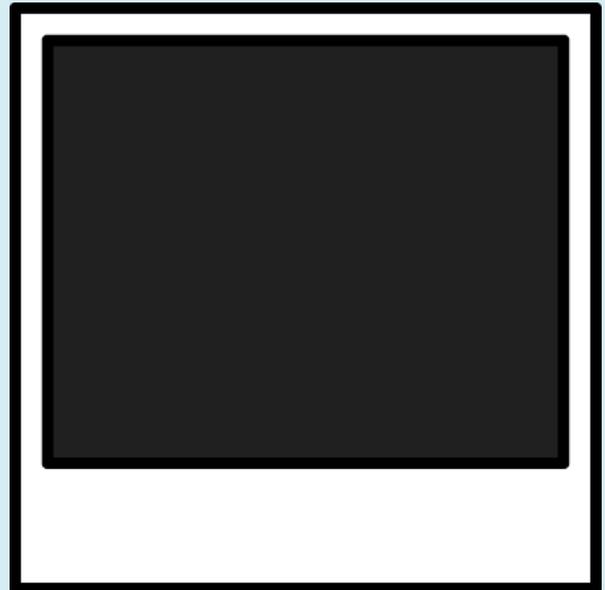
Please thank Karryn for her services to us.



## Thank You!

There's no photographic proof, so there's no need to tell Paula, but there are many rumors that Arie Kroeze was up on a tall ladder blowing the leaves and debris out of our rain gutters.

Amazingly, the job was completed before our first serious rains. Just in case the rumors are true, be sure to thank Arie (but don't tell Paula, because he is not supposed to be on ladders!)



# Epilogue

*(You may safely skip this...)*

by Mike Epting, Echoes Editor

Christmas is coming like a freight train this year. It's hard not to be overwhelmed by all the obligatory stuff that goes with the non-Christian aspects of the holiday. The vital family-oriented aspects are great and we're lucky that they have developed out of our Christian tradition. Still, I hope we can retain a little bit of the sense of wonder that we had as children. I'm still a child myself, so no problem...

Rue Knoll recently mentioned a song called "One of Us" that was popular back in 1995. It was also the theme song of a TV show named "Joan of Arcadia", which featured a girl who regularly talked to God and carried out specific tasks for him.

Rue was delighted by one line of the song: "What if God was one of us? Just a slob like one of us..." I personally like the next bit: "Just a stranger on the bus trying to make his way home."

The song was controversial at the time, as was the TV show. Some felt it was disrespectful, but I felt it was honest. I won't print all the lyrics, but you can look them up. Some were possibly over the line.

Those who were critical of the song were, in my opinion, forgetting about Christmas. There is no question that God was "one of us", starting on that first Christmas Day, right? If someone is offended by the notion that He might be a "stranger on a bus", they must be absolutely outraged by the idea that God

could be a newborn baby, blind and confused, dependent entirely on his mother for life and sustenance.

Can you imagine anything more ridiculous than God as a helpless baby? We Christians must be very brave people indeed to go out in public and make such an outrageous claim.



It's central to our faith that God was (and is), in fact, "one of us", a stranger trying to make his way home. The Gospel tells us that Jesus was sometimes confused and lost. Although it's only mentioned briefly, Luke tells us that he became a smart-aleck teenager, lecturing his elders in the temple. He ultimately became the greatest teacher ever, but still he was a person, walking and talking and eating and sleeping. Just a slob like one of us.

The text we are using for our Sunday afternoon study of Acts often asks bewildering and perhaps unanswerable questions. An example of one that set me back on my heels is this:

*Reflect on and discuss which of the following best describes your devotion or spirituality in action:*

- ◇ *It is important that I fulfill my vocation (calling) in the world.*
- ◇ *It is important that I learn to walk*

*in holiness with the Lord.*

◇ *It is important that I be one with the Creator.*

◇ *It is important that I obey God's will completely.*

I can't speak for you, but I can safely say that the first choice is probably the best I can claim. In light of the

other choices, though, it seems very shallow, almost a cop-out.

Pat Smith pointed out that the last bullet seems an impossible goal. Who could possibly "obey

God's will completely"? I agreed but pointed out that I had never even considered being "one with the Creator". That's unthinkable.

Until, that is, we consider that God is "one of us, just a slob like one of us". Remember the orange cars and trucks — if you don't, Pastor Lyn's sermon on 11/24 is on Facebook. If we see God's presence then maybe we can, in fact, be faithful. If we can't be "one with the Creator", at least we might be able to acknowledge that God is part of our lives, all the time.

One problem with Christmas is that we have heard the same story every year of our lives and we have become numb to it. With repetition it has become mundane. I plan to try to hear and see the story through new eyes this year. I'm going to try to grapple with the notion that at Christmas God became one of us. Just a slob like one of us. What a concept!

# Emanuel Calendar of Events

# December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> <b>CARE CUPBOARD SUNDAY</b> 9:30 am Worship Service 11:00 am Ministry Mtg. 4:00 pm Bible Study - Acts	<b>2</b> 10:00 am Day Care Chapel 1:00 pm Care Cupboard 3:00 pm Lydia Circle 4:30 pm MSYC Rehearsal	<b>3</b> 7:00 am Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 12:00 pm Text Study	<b>4</b> 7:00 am Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 10:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Advent Supper	<b>5</b> 9:30 am The Joyful Singers Adult Bible Study	<b>6</b> 9:00 am Quilting	<b>7</b> 10:00 am Organ practice 10:00 am WELCA Cookie Exchange Party 1:00 pm Family Promise Set-up
<b>8</b> <b>Family Promise HEALING PRAYER SUNDAY</b> 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am WELCA Bake Sale 11:00 am COUNCIL Mtg. 4:00 pm Bible Study - Acts	<b>9</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 1:00 pm Care Cupboard 4:30 pm MSYC Rehearsal 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>10</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 12:00 pm Text Study	<b>11</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 10:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 11:30 am NO-Multi Faith Leadership Meeting 5:30 pm Advent Supper	<b>12</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 9:30 am Adult Bible Study 4:00 pm Day Care Board Mtg. 7:00 pm LEAH CIRCLE at Sue Wilke's	<b>13</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 9:00 am Quilting	<b>14</b> <b>Family Promise</b> 10:00 am Organ practice 5:00 pm Caroling
<b>15</b> <b>BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS SUNDAY</b> 9:30 am All Together 9:30 am Worshiping Jesus 9:30 am Christmas Pageant 9:30 am Worship Service 11:00 am Confirmation Class 4:00 pm Bible Study - Acts	<b>16</b> 10:00 am Day Care Chapel 4:30 pm MSYC Rehearsal 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>17</b> 12:00 pm Text Study	<b>18</b> 10:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Advent Supper	<b>19</b> 9:30 am Adult Bible Study 1:30 pm REBECCA CIRCLE	<b>20</b> 9:00 am Quilting 6:30 pm Day Care Christmas Program	<b>21</b> 10:00 am Organ practice
<b>22</b> <b>INTER-FAITH SUNDAY</b> 9:30 am Worship Service	<b>23</b> <b>Echoes Deadline</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st 4:30 pm MSYC Rehearsal - Winter Break 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>24</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st 8:00 am Office open 1/2 day 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	<b>25</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st OFFICE CLOSED	<b>26</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st OFFICE CLOSED 9:30 am Adult Bible Study	<b>27</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st OFFICE CLOSED	<b>28</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st 10:00 am Organ practice
<b>29</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st 9:30 am Worship Service - Lessons & Carols	<b>30</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st 4:30 pm MSYC Rehearsal - Winter Break 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	<b>31</b> ELDC CLOSED through Jan 1st <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b> 8:00 am Office open 1/2 day				