

The Echoes

February 2020

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85
*& forward
in faith*

Emanuel Lutheran Church

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

From Pastor Lyn

Dear Church – Emanuel Church in particular – welcome to February!

The month when the focus is on love. Eros love in the way of culture. Agape love in the way of the church, or more correctly – in the way of our Lord. God’s love is or is meant to be at the root of our congregation. Everything ministry related that happens at and away from Emanuel flows out of our understanding of what the Bible teaches – God is love and God loves us.



On February 9 the brand new baptismal font will be dedicated. Baptism is our core identity as Lutheran Christians and it is the prime event that begins our relationship with our church community - those who share an agape love as sisters and brothers in Christ. In other words, Baptism is a big deal. You will be hearing about Baptism a lot this year and I invite you to spend some time thinking about what baptism means to you.

The new font is located at the entrance to the worship space (sanctuary). Its placement is intentional in that baptism is a “welcome” or “entrance” into the life of the worshipping community. It is where we begin and ultimately where we will end. The new font will always have water, every time we gather for worship. As you enter the sanctuary dip your fingers into the water and make the sign of the cross over your forehead or heart as a way of remembering you are a child of God. Do the same when you leave as a way of remembering you are a child of God in every way every day.



The reference to “where we will end” (at the font) in the previous paragraph is true. When we die we will claim the promise God made to us in baptism; that is, God accompanies us through life and through death. On Ash Wednesday, February 26 this year, the sign of the cross is made on our foreheads with water but first with ash. The ash is a poignant visual reminder to us

and everyone who sees that ash-mark, that we are “dust and to dust

Emanuel is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Sunday Worship: 9:30 am

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Monday through Thursday:
8 am — 3 pm
Friday 8 am — 2 pm

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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.

Pastor Lyn, continued

we shall return.” As Christians, death does not intimidate or frighten us because, in baptism the declaration is made that God will get the last word with us. That word is Life.

Baptism is a big deal. In baptism we (adult baptism) or our parents (infant baptism) promise that a relationship will be established between the baptized and God, the baptized and the community. The hope of the Church is that this relationship will be a life-long engagement but the reality is, often it is not. But, it’s never too late to enrich or deepen your relationship with God and with one another. Think about it ...

There’s so much more to say about baptism and about Ash Wednesday. Again this year, the main Ash Wednesday service will be held at noon. There will also be a shorter service at 7 pm offering only imposition of ashes and communion.

Come to church, come back to church.

In Christ,

Pastor Lyn

Day Care 20th Anniversary, Jan 5, 2020



Pastor Lyn recognized Emanuel Lutheran Day Care’s 20 Years of Ministry and Service during worship on January 5.



My Challenge to Emanuel

Submitted by Paula Kroeze

I would like to issue a challenge to my fellow members of Emanuel. This challenge is based on experiences I have had with another congregation. A congregation that has celebrated its 175th anniversary. A congregation that is not quite the size of ours. A church that I think is the future of the ELCA.

As many of you know, our son, Will, is a pastor of a church in the lower east side of Manhattan. This is truly an amazing church. Yes, I think it is the church of the future. A church that the rest of the ELCA can look to as a model for the future. This congregation is not large. It is extremely diverse in every way. It is one of the most joyful and loving group of people I have met. Many people travel quite a distance to worship there. Some people are from the neighborhood. They are also people from all over the world. The average age is 45. They are members because they believe this congregation is important.

They have a food program that feeds 250 hot meals a day. Their food pantry is like a small market. They get so much food donated from businesses around the city it keeps the lunch program and pantry well stocked. It is a self-funded and self-operating program. They have a director who works long and hard and knows what he is doing. I am not comparing what they do and what we do, we each have valid reasons for doing things the way we do. I am proud of Emanuel! I want to say I think Katie's Kitchen and the Care Cupboard as well as Family Promise are simply terrific. The members of Emanuel who come out and work and support those particular programs work hard and do great work. I think they are all amazing! It's not easy! I also feel our Day Care and Preschool programs are wonderful and should be fully supported.

The annual budget of the congregation is separate from the food program's budget. I was surprised to learn that a large part of the congregation's budget, building upkeep, bills, salaries and the like, are covered by outside donations! This wonderful little church is so important to the community of the lower east side, and has been for decades, that people outside the church, people in the greater community, donate tens of thousands of dollars to the church!

My challenge is this, we make Emanuel important enough for the community of Modesto that we would be really missed by the community if we were not here. That we create a ministry so important to greater Modesto that it would be missed if we did not provide it. Missed enough that people in the community would help. We do receive help from the community for Katie's Kitchen and the Care Cupboard. People outside the congregation come in and help out in the kitchen and cleaning up. They recognize the importance of what is done. That is a wonderful first step and it shows that what is being done is important. But, what about thinking a little bigger. What about seeing a future for Emanuel where it would be truly missed if it were not here?



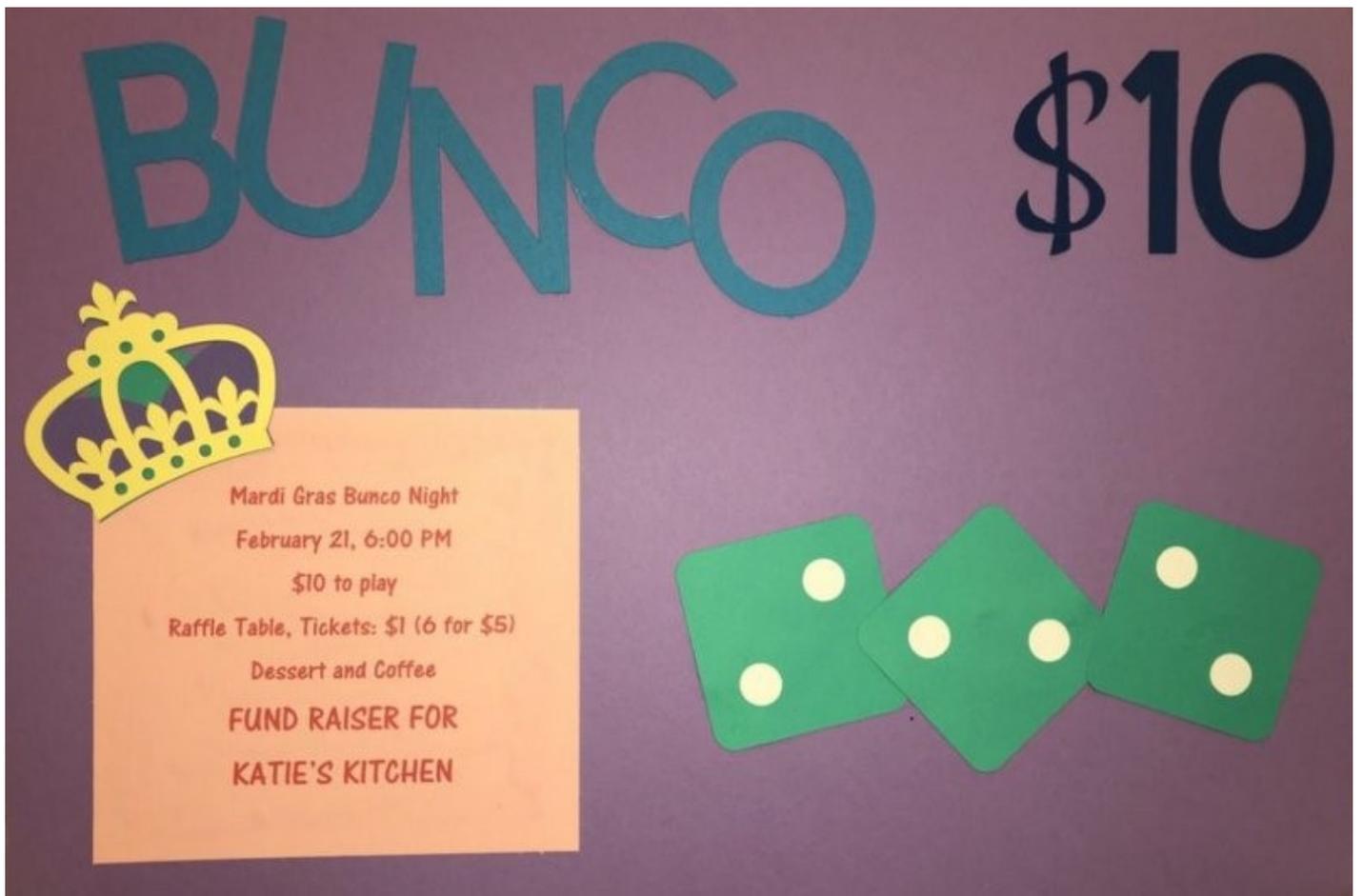
Mardi Gras Bunco Night

Submitted by Sue Wilke

SAVE THE DATE! On February 21 at 6 pm, we will have a Bunco Night Fund Raiser for Katie's Kitchen. Dessert will be served. Bunco is an easy game to learn and play. It takes no prior or special skill.

In addition to the game, there will be a raffle table. Tickets will be \$1 apiece with \$5 buying 6 tickets.

Please come out for an evening of fun and fellowship and support this ministry that provides a hot, nutritious breakfast twice a week to MJC students and faculty.



85th Anniversary Celebration

On January 19, 2020, we celebrated the anniversary of our founding as a place to worship in Modesto. The prayer on the right was on our bulletin cover that Sunday. We worshipped and celebrated. Quite a few people shared their memories of Emanuel through the years. Our Fellowship ministry provided delicious tri-tip sliders and other food. Here are snippets from the day.

Brothers and sisters: We have come together to dedicate this church for the worship of Almighty God and for the building up of the body of Christ. From this day forward let it be a place for the gathering of people of God, a place for proclaiming the Gospel through Word and Sacrament, a place for bringing life to us and to this community ... And now, O God, visit us with your mercy and blessing as we dedicate this house to your glory and honor and to the service of all people in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
(Special Services, Augsburg Publishing) January 24, 1935



85th Anniversary Celebration, continued



Family Promise

David Holtz again took the lead and enabled us to host four wonderful families from January 26 through February 1. There was a relatively large number of delightful children this time. If you were able to help, you most likely benefitted as much as the families. This was another great opportunity to be God's hands.



2020 Council

At our Annual Meeting on January 12, we elected new council members to serve Emanuel during 2020. Pastor Lyn installed the 2020 Congregational Council during the service on January 19. Here's the new group: Sue Wilke, Martha Strand, Dennis Strand, Fanney Bjargardottir, Robert Reuter (Treasurer), Josh Hollinger, Janice Watkins, Pat Smith, and Elaine Ixcot. Please pray for them and their work for us.



December Council Notes

Council met on January 5 at 11 am. Bob Reuter provided an updated building fund budget showing an estimate of the amount to be added to our building loan to cover parking lot repairs, including accessibility fixes. Council voted



	December Income	December Expenses	December Gain/Loss
General Fund	25,042	(22,347)	2,695
Building Fund	5,865	(6,929)	367
Day Care	26,117	(25,750)	367
TOTALS	57,024	(55,026)	1,998

to submit this revised budget to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting. Outgoing President Sue Wilke lead “thank you’s” to all of the 2019 council, including the departing members, Jim Barton, Rick Unruh, and Mike Epting.

Servant of the Month

Mercy Maya is a long-time member of Emanuel. Her special ministry seems to be Family Promise. She has frequently volunteered for all of the various tasks associated with our support for the guest families. When David Holtz announced that there were still vacancies for the week of 25 January, Mercy immediately stepped up and filled in several of the blanks. She not only served dinner, but also served as an evening host and an overnight host. She also helped David with moving the beds to their next host church. Mercy is a real champion for us and we thank her.



February Birthdays

Birthday Blessing Sunday is February 16

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



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|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2/1 Kathleen Reuter | 2/11 Ralph Herman | 2/16 Alora Skustad |
| 2/3 Barbara Crawford | 2/15 Laurie Spinuzzi | 2/19 Bethany Gierhan |
| 2/5 Ben Knoll | 2/15 Chris Schmidt | 2/28 Teresa Scott |
| 2/9 Izabella Klenz | 2/15 Molly Lastra | 2/28 Suzanne Wilke |

Epilogue

(You may safely skip this...)

by Mike Epting, Echoes Editor

I know that pride is a sin, but I'm really proud to be a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Look at the logo of our national church, below. How profound and provocative these simple words are: "God's work. Our hands."

I recently encountered a person who had experienced a great deal of torment with her son. She told me that she ultimately was forced to "let him go and give him to God." Several of us have had similar experiences and have been forced to make similar hard decisions. It's easy to be critical without having walked a mile in her shoes, but I wonder if this lady realizes that God's hands are her hands?

When people talk about giving God their problems, they are usually on sound theological grounds. They really mean that they are letting go of their worries, not their responsibility to continue to work on their problems. The most commonly quoted reference is Philippians 4:6-7:

"Do not worry about anything,

but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

So, yes, in the face of trouble and worry, it really does make a great deal of sense to ask for God's help, but then to continue to be proactive about eliminating or reducing the sources of our worries. Go to a doctor, he or she might well be God's hands! Or maybe, shockingly, a lawyer might be God's hands today!

The other day, Rose shared this meme on Facebook:



A cousin of mine made this comment: "When someone says their prayers never leave the building, I think they need to hang this sign on their mirror."

Since we ourselves are God's

hands, we need to figure out what part we play in God's work. There's where things get murky for me. There is an infinity of opportunities, but a finite amount of energy and time. We obviously need to choose our challenges and put our energies where we can do the most good.

All of us are in the same boat here. None of us have the ability to be God's hands in all things. We can all, however, be God's hands in some things. We pray that the little we do is enough and that we can choose wisely, with God's help.

Emanuel's 85th anniversary and our focus on the future may help us to figure this out. Paula Kroeze issued a challenge in this issue — maybe we can find some guidance there. Pastor Lyn and the new council are going to be working on Emanuel's future. I hope the rest of us are also firmly committed to being God's hands!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Emanuel Calendar of Events

February 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 CARE CUPBOARD SUNDAY Worship Service 9:30 am Ministry Mtg. 11:00 am	3 Day Care Chapel 10:00 am Lydia Circle 3:00 pm MSYC Rehearsal 4:30 pm	4 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Outreach Committee Mtg. 10:30 am Text Study 12:00 pm	5 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 10:00 am	6 The Joyful Singers Adult Bible Study 9:30 am	7 9:00 am Quilting	8 9:00 am Violin Studio - Facility use 10:00 am Organ practice
9 Baptismal Font Dedication HEALING PRAYER SUNDAY KATIE'S KITCHEN SUNDAY All Together 9:30 am Worshiping Jesus 9:30 am Bishop Mark at ELC 4:00 pm Bible Study - Acts	10 Care Cupboard 1:00 pm MSYC Rehearsal 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm	11 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Text Study 12:00 pm	12 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 10:00 am Multi Faith Leadership Meeting (M-Link) 11:30 am	13 Adult Bible Study 9:30 am Day Care Board Mtg. 4:00 pm LEAH CIRCLE 7:00 pm	14 9:00 am Quilting	15 9:00 am Violin Studio - Facility use 10:00 am Organ practice 3:30 pm Pop-Up Theology with Pr. Lyn
16 BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS SUNDAY Worship Service 9:30 am COUNCIL Mtg. 11:00 am	17 Holiday - OFFICE & DAY CARE CLOSED Day Care Chapel 10:00 am NO-MSYC Rehearsal 4:30 pm Pres. Day 7:00 pm Women's Bible Study	18 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Text Study 12:00 pm	19 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Weekly Staff Meeting 10:00 am	20 Adult Bible Study 9:30 am REBECCA CIRCLE 1:30 pm	21 9:00 am Quilting 6:00 pm Katie's Kitchen - Bunco Night	22 9:00 am Violin Studio - Facility use 10:00 am Organ practice
23 INTER-FAITH SUNDAY Worship Service 9:30 am Confirmation Class 11:00 am	24 Echoes Deadline Care Cupboard 1:00 pm MSYC Rehearsal 4:30 pm Women's Bible Study 7:00 pm	25 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Text Study 12:00 pm	26 Breakfast in Katie's Kitchen 7:00 am Ash Wednesday Service 12:00 pm Imposition of Ashes 7:00 pm	27 Adult Bible Study 9:30 am	28 9:00 am Quilting	29 9:00 am Violin Studio - Facility use 3:00 pm Violin Recital - facility use