

The Emmanuel Envoy

February 2022

Worshiping God with Joy!

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ~Colossians 3:16

In the January edition of the Envoy, I invited you to share your stories about worshiping God with joy, which is the first part of our identity statement:

***We are Emmanuel Lutheran Church.
Worshiping God with joy, loving one another, serving all.
We welcome you.***

In the pages of this Envoy, you will read the responses that we received to that invitation. In addition to what others shared about worshiping God with joy, I am going to take my space in this monthly article to share my response to the question, “I experienced joy in worship when...”

Of course, over a lifetime of worship with many different congregations, I have had hundreds, maybe thousands, of joyful moments in worship, but for this article, I am going to focus on some recent moments of joy.

I experienced joy in worship during the first Sunday morning Zoom worship service that we had on March 22, 2020. I went into the Zoom experience, reluctantly, with great fear that it wouldn't work. I knew that we had to try something but I had deep doubts that we would be able to pull off meaningful worship using a medium that was unfamiliar to me and to many others in the congregation. I can still remember the deep sense of joy I felt on that first Zoom Sunday, when your faces started to appear on the screen and I realized that so much of our community had figured out this, for many of us, new medium so that we could worship together. Then, when I heard the first notes of the beautiful music that Gabby had prepared for us, I knew for sure that we were going to be okay, at least in terms of our worship life. I can still feel the joy I felt in those moments, tightening my chest and bringing tears to my eyes almost two years later, as I remember the comfort of knowing that we could still be a community, worshiping together.

I experienced joy in worship when people responded to our invitations to send in artwork and videos and pictures for Zoom worship. I was often the one extending the invitation, but the responses were sent to our digital ministry email, so I usually didn't know how many responses we had received until Rebecca had taken them and turned them into videos for Zoom worship. I experienced so much joy in seeing how many people responded and helped to make our worship services beautiful and artistic. It meant so much to me that worship was still a communal offering and that so many people went out of their way to contribute something to make our worship experience more beautiful and more meaningful. It all meant a lot to me, but here are some examples of what I'm talking about:

- the Pentecost Acts reading in many languages,
- the Silent Night singing and candle lighting,
- the Easter Vigil readings and dressing of the altar,
- the pictures that were shared for Confirmation and First Communion celebrations
- and the pictures that were shared for the pandemic anniversary.

I experienced joy in worship on the first Sunday when we celebrated communion together after the lockdown. It meant so much to me to be able to preside at communion and to receive communion after so long, three months since the beginning of the lockdown. A lot of effort was put into making sure that communion could be shared at Emmanuel with minimal risk of exposure to Covid-19 and with the full inclusion of everyone who wanted to receive communion, through our communion delivery plan. The feeling of speaking the words of the Eucharistic Prayer (eucharist means thanksgiving), during which the promises and the mighty acts of God to work against evil and to bring life, brought me a powerful sense of joy. In the midst of death, we had gathered to speak and receive life, coming to us from the God of resurrection and love.

There are so many other stories of joy I could tell, but the final joyful worship memory that I want to share is of the Sunday when we finally returned having a full in-person worship service. It was such a joyful feeling to return to our beautiful Sanctuary, to sing together in person, to pick up the familiar patterns of the communion worship service and discover that they still “fit”, to commune together, and to share the peace with each other.

I am grateful and joyful that in so many different ways during the past couple of years we have been able to find so many ways to live out who we have said that we are.

*We are Emmanuel Lutheran Church.
Worshiping God with joy!*

In Christ,
Pastor Amanda

Prayer Concerns List

Susan Tomasello	Lyndsay Boysen
Bill Rapp	Jon Pierce
Bo Ruda	Tammie Ruda
Laurie Ann Friello	Micki Hein
Mary Stevens	Jean Croll
The Davis Family	Rebecca Sol
Dorothy Cegelis	John Sera
Ann-Marie Litcof	Danny Connolly
George Beaudoin	Linda Stipkovich
Paul & Heather	Lisa Gugliuzza
Crisafulli	Cathleen Boyd
Tony & Sheri Nikolassy	Terry Thomas
Jovanni Sanchez-Colon	Leslie Daskam
The Dimpel Family	John Warner



Thank You Notes

Dear Friends at Emmanuel,

Thank you for all the gifs and visits. I am on the mend. Hope to see you all soon.

Regards,
Ann & Rick Martin



To Emmanuel Sunday School kids,

Thank you so very much for the lovely card you sent recently. And thank you as well church family for the flowers.

Sheri & Tony Nikolassy



Dear Emmanuel,

Thank you so much for the basket of goodies and gifts I've received in the past year. It was so thoughtful and very much appreciated.

The cards from the Sunday School were special and very sweet.

Thank you...with love,

Phyllis Kivi



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Let the Confirmation class make you dinner! The Confirmation class and their families invite you to a Pancake Supper on

**Shrove Tuesday, March 1,
6:30-7:30 p.m.**

We will prepare for the Lenten season with good food and good fellowship and by burning last year's Palm Sunday palms to make ashes for our Ash Wednesday services.

Sign up now on the sign-up sheet in the Narthex or Hallway or using the Pancake Supper sign-up genius link that is emailed out every week.

Ash Wednesday Worship



We begin the season of Lent with two opportunities for worship on Ash Wednesday **March 2nd**.

6:00 p.m. Zoom
7:30 p.m. In-Person

The church will be open from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. for people to receive the imposition of ashes or to pick up ashes for use during the Zoom services.

Lenten Services

The theme of our Lenten Midweek Services is based on our Identity Statement which is:

*We are Emmanuel Lutheran Church.
Worshiping God with Joy, loving one another,
serving all. We welcome you!*

For five **Wednesdays** in Lent different speakers will we will be exploring each element of our identity statement.

March 9	We are Emmanuel Lutheran Church
March 16	Worshiping God with Joy
March 23	Loving One Another
March 30	Serving All
April 6	We Welcome You

Speakers for the Lenten Service will be shared in the Sunday announcements and in the Wednesday and Friday emails.

The midweek Lenten services will be held on Zoom, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Links for midweek worship will be emailed out on Wednesday mornings and recordings of the services will be shared with the congregation.

Our **weekly Prayer Group**, which meets on Wednesdays most of the year, 7:30-9:00 will be **moving to Thursdays** for five weeks during Lent. Prayer Group will return to Wednesdays during Holy Week.

For those of you who really look forward to sharing soup during our Lenten activities, we will be having a soup exchange on the Sundays during Lent (though not on Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion). If you would like to share a soup, please bring one to share and if you would like to take some soup home to eat for Sunday afternoon lunch or to save to eat on Wednesday, please bring a container to take your soup home in.

Worship Team Planning for Holy Week – You Can Be a Part

The Worship Ministry Team is having a meeting on Sunday, **March 13th at 12:30 p.m.**, in the Founder's Room. If you would like to be a part of planning Emmanuel's worship life for Holy Week, Easter, and beyond, you are welcome to attend this meeting. If you would like to attend virtually, please let Pastor Amanda know and we can set something up for you.

Holy Week Worship

Although Lent is still a few days away, the Worship Team has made the following plans already for Holy Week Worship.

Maundy Thursday – April 14th
6:00 p.m. Zoom
7:30 p.m. In-Person

Good Friday – April 15th
6:00 p.m. Zoom (Stations of the Cross)
7:30 p.m. In-Person (Tenebrae)

Plans for Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil are still being made.

First Communion

Emmanuel will be offering First Communion classes for children in 2nd grade and older this spring. If you are interested in having your child prepare for and receive First Communion, please email Pastor Amanda at pastor@emmanuelnorwood.org. Here is the schedule for First Communion classes:

March 12 th	Session 1	10:00-11:30 a.m.
March 19 th	Session 2	10:00-11:30 a.m.
April 2 nd	Session 3	10:00-11:30 a.m.
April 9 th	Session 4	10:00-11:30 a.m.
April 30 th	Session 5	4:00-5:30 p.m.

First Communion Sunday - May 1 at the 11:15 in person worship service.



Our Experiences Worshipping God with Joy

As promised, we are including stories from our members.

It was Christmas. Probably not Christmas day but the Christmas season.

I was about 13 years old at the time, sitting in church with the Luther League pack, towards the back as was our custom but not too far back to be obvious about it. I never sat with my parents—that just doesn't happen very often for preacher's kids.

Everything seemed pretty normal until the offering. Usually, the choir would sing during the collection, but this day it was just two voices coming from the balcony singing a duet. I recognized the hymn right away, 'In the bleak mid-winter'- still one of my favorites. It took a few more seconds to recognize the voices and when I did, I must admit that joy is NOT what I felt. My parents were up there in the balcony singing together and what I felt sitting down in the pew with my friends was red-hot embarrassment. What are they doing? Why are they doing this to me?

I don't know why I reacted that way. They actually sounded great. My dad's tenor carrying the melody and my mom doing the harmony. It wasn't like I hadn't heard them sing in church before--my dad sang the liturgy every Sunday. But they didn't sing together, just the two of them. And for some reason--shyness? teenage angst? Whatever it was, I felt exposed and vulnerable.

I'm happy to report that my initial reaction passed quickly and when it did, what followed was a deep experience for me of joy in worship. At the time, I'm sure I could not articulate what that joy was about. But with many years perspective and even more twists and turns on the path of life's journey since then, I will try. I'm sure the joy was in part about gratitude for my parents. Being a preacher's kid is not always easy but I consider it to be one of the greatest blessings in my life. The joy was also about knowing my heavenly parent and the confidence and peace that relationship provides. And I'm sure the joy was about celebrating Jesus' birth and understanding anew that our God is Emmanuel, God with us. And if I'm honest, the joy probably also contained the happiness and relief I felt when they made it through the piece entirely on key.
Joan Bengtson



Each year I feel such joy when viewing the children's Christmas program. They are just so cute and happy.

On a similar note, I really enjoy the children's sermons. I look around and see the congregation so wrapped up in watching the kids' reactions and answers. I like watching Pastor Amanda encourage answers from the kids.

I just enjoy being in church with such a caring, comforting congregation.

I've found joy being a part of the choir family. It's a family within a bigger family.

Similarly, being a member of the quilting group has been joyful. It's wonderful when the

confirmation class is there and it's fulfilling to do something for others who have so much less than we do. *Arlene Cegelis*



I experience joy in worship each time I am Assisting Minister. I feel so comfortable and fulfilled. It gives me an inner peace.

I also experienced joy while being a healing minister. The first time, I was a nervous wreck, but prayed to God to help guide me. When the Healing service was over, I was amazed at how comfortable I felt; as though it was something I was meant to do. *Leslie Daskam*



Church bells: The sound of church bells ringing out after a service is a sound of pure joy that I never tire of hearing. The steeple in the church I grew up in, Church of Our Savior in Jenkintown, PA, housed a bell that came from derailed train. The lore of the bell is that one of the founders of the church was so overjoyed that his daughter had survived the deadly train wreck that he had the bell from the train placed in the steeple. At the end of every service, after the choir and the priest had processed out, the bells would be rung. My house was about two blocks away from the church and I can remember hearing them ring out on Saturday afternoons after a wedding, Sunday mornings, and for other occasions. On my wedding day I pulled the rope and listened while the bells proclaimed our joyous news.

Sharing the peace: Sharing the peace is a moment of worship that brings me joy as God's love is shared with one another; it is an act that is unifying and showing that God's love is shared amongst and between all of us and that love is nothing less than joyous. When I was in Israel, we celebrated Mass at Church of Saint Catherine's in Bethlehem on the Epiphany. Even though I spoke not a word of Latin or Arabic (the languages that the service was shared in) it was an utterly beautiful service. When it came time for the peace I, and those on our tour shared the peace

with one another. As was my habit, I turned around to greet those behind me. There weren't many people in the pew that surrounded us but one woman, who I believe was a Palestinian Christian, greeted me and we shook hands and said "Peace be with you" in our own languages and we shared a warm and caring smile and a nod of understanding and acknowledgement of a deeper connection. That shared experience reminded me of the love that God has for all of us and the joy that it brings me to share that love and peace with others. *Rebecca Sol*



I am truly blessed to have a lifetime relationship with Emmanuel Lutheran Church and its community. It has been my only church and a constant throughout my life.

Where and when do I experience joy at Emmanuel? It is ever-present for me. Let's start with just the physical ways that the building floods my soul with memories.

Walking up the courtyard, I am reminded of times as a youth playing in that space as we waited for rides after junior choir practice or confirmation classes. It's wonderful to see the Friday Night Live kids from today in that same space.

The Founders Room brings back memories of our junior choir rehearsals -- we had a big group back in the day. I'm also reminded of the twins baptism and gathering in the room on that happiest of days. Attending the Senior lunches in that space as a guest of my mother and then MJ Ekstrand, and the love that was shown to our seniors by sharing a meal and talent.

Kask Hall brings back memories of Luther League, pancake suppers, rummage sales, and sharing time more recently with the quilters and my niece, Caroline. The joy of community and doing good for others pours forth from this space.

Heading downstairs - I recall my time in the pre-school room, eating graham crackers and drinking Hawaiian Punch and the fantastic women who molded those early years. I see my mom and Helen Hultman, teaching Sunday School in the fireplace room. I walk the center hallway downstairs and I remember spending part of

Sunday School sitting in those tiny pews and learning new songs. The nursery was very active back then, and some Sundays were spent helping out with the little ones.

The Sunday School office was at the base of the middle flight of stairs - I recall helping out and counting the Sunday School offerings that came in each week - lots of nickels, dimes, and quarters back then. The space also served as a mini library and we tried to keep it in order.

Wandering around the hallway, I remember Sunday School with Connie Ferris, as my teacher. I was a little bit afraid of her, not sure why.

Heading to the Sanctuary -- so many memories sparking joy in my relationship with God and Emmanuel. So many special services and with a number of pastors leading the way. Baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and even funerals have lasting memories. My sister was married at Emmanuel in the early 1970's and the hippy days. I can remember Pastor Kask being a bit unnerved as bearded, long-haired, barefoot members of the wedding party entered the Sanctuary. (He made them put on their shoes.) I think back on high holy Sundays when both choirs sang and sitting in a full choir loft- the raised voices in song bringing joy to all who heard us.

Nowadays, I find joy sharing God's word with the next generation to be a blessing. I'm joyful that we are no longer thinking of terms of this community existing in just the physical space on Berwick Road. The pandemic has been difficult, but the silver lining is of being able to worship together even when I'm out of town is a wonderful way to be connected. I experience joy every Wednesday evening when our small but mighty Prayer Group convenes - such a caring and welcoming group.

A lifetime of connections, community, and memories in coming together in God's presence are truly blessings in my life. The people, ways of worshipping, and activities have changed over the years, but we have an amazing community with a wonderful leader in Pastor Amanda and I look forward to continuing this experience for the years to come. My hope for all is that they can build similar lasting memories and experience Emmanuel joy in a similar way. *Elaine Gebhardt*

Let the Quilt Making Begin



Arlene Cegelis & Susan Robertson



Judy Gear

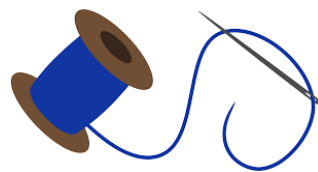


Leslie Daskam



Lorraine Lynch

The 2022 season of LWR quilt assembly has officially begun. Here we have a few of the ladies—in action! You can join in the fun, Saturdays, 9 am to noon in Kask Hall. No experience necessary.



Rummage Sale April 2022

The rummage sale is coming back this spring by popular demand! To keep its success going, we will need your help – as well as ‘stuff’ to offer.

Please start to bring your good stuff after services on **Sunday, April 24**. And if you’re here that day and can stay a few minutes after worship, it would be most appreciated if you can help set up tables in Kask Hall



Again, we must say... Please do **not** bring TV’s, monitors, or computers—these items do not sell and it costs us money to discard them.

We will be setting things up for the sale on **Wednesday, April 27** and **Thursday, April 28**, starting around 9:00 a.m. until usually sometime after lunch (which we provide). If you’re available to join in the unpacking and sorting and placing – come on down!

The rummage sale itself will be **Friday, April 29** and **Saturday, April 30, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm**. We can certainly use help anytime during these hours.

And last but not least, on Saturday afternoon we need a few people for the final push.

- A few people to take our leftovers away to Savers.
- A few to clean up Kask Hall.

Tasks to be done:

The extra boxes need to be broken down and recycled. (The church only has one recycling bin and there are too many boxes for it. We need a person or two willing to take some of the recycling home.)

We also need to recycle all the extra plastic bags and paper bags.

Then Kask Hall needs to be mopped or vacuumed. Where all the dust bunnies come from—who knows, since they aren’t there earlier in the week.

If you can take on any one of these tasks, *please* let me know. The more people that join in – the quicker it all goes.

This is an event for *all* members of Emmanuel and friends. Just to remind everyone, last fall’s sale earned \$1700.

This past year we have used some of the proceeds to buy items not in the church budget. Did you see the new window candelabras this past Christmas/Advent season? We’ve also purchased new altar paraments and we provide camperships to Calumet. We hope to donate all the unsold books, CDs and DVDs to the charity “More Than Words”.

This is a fun event with much laughter and food. We supply coffee, snacks and yummy lunches all four days. If you have any questions, please talk to Arlene Cegelis (781-762-0360), acegelis@norwoodlight.com. Thank you.

National Youth Gathering



I have some sad news. We had seven kids and two, possibly three, adults scheduled to attend the 2022 National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN this summer. Unfortunately, during the height of the spread the Omicron variant the organizers of the Gathering made the heartbreaking decision to cancel this summer's National Youth Gathering. They did not make this decision lightly or easily. They were devastated to have to make this decision and I am devastated for our church's youth in this congregation and beyond, who were excited about the Gathering and looking forward to such an amazing experience.

As sad and frustrated as I am that this decision had to be made, I do understand why the Gathering organizers felt that they had to cancel the Gathering. The National Youth Gathering brings together over 30,000 youth and adults from all over the country and the world and requires a tremendous amount of organization and money to pull off. It is not the kind of thing that can be cancelled at the last minute without the loss of a lot of money and a lot of time for the churchwide organization and for congregations, youth, and families. They had to make the decision that seemed to be the safest and most responsible, knowing that the Gathering is not something that can be changed on a dime or cancelled at the last minute without significant repercussions.

Of course, this means that some youth will not be able to attend a National Youth Gathering as a participant, which is heartbreaking. They can still attend a Gathering as a volunteer, but that does not negate the grief and frustration of yet another experience of their teenage years being lost to the Covid-19 pandemic. Please know that at Emmanuel we will continue to offer meaningful opportunities for our youth to connect in fellowship, worship, and service, with each other, with our congregation and with the wider church, even as we look forward with hope to the 2024 National Youth Gathering.

Pastor Amanda