



The Emmanuel Envoy

January 2022

Joy, yes 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

Back in 2019, Emmanuel's Forward Leadership Team led the congregation through a process called "Why Emmanuel?". We spent the season of Lent that year gathering stories from people at Emmanuel about why they were a part of the Emmanuel community. Our hope was that that process would help us to see some common themes and threads about our church that would help us to understand who we are as a congregation. As we listened carefully to the stories that people shared with us, four things stood out for us: Family, Service, Worship, and Welcome (Inclusivity). We had an event in June of 2019 that helped us narrow down how people at Emmanuel experienced those things and that experience guided us in the development of Emmanuel's statement of identity, which is:

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

As a congregation, this is who we have said that we are. This is how we experience ourselves and how we want to be known to others.

During 2022, we are to spend some time exploring what it means to be a community that worships, loves, serves, and welcomes. For the season of the church year that we are currently in, the time after Epiphany, we will be celebrating and embracing that we are a community that worships God with joy.

Our worship life looks a lot different than it did in 2019. We have been led down paths that we never would have imagined back then, but I believe and have heard from others, that our worship during the depths of the pandemic did bring a lot of comfort, joy, and peace. During this time of pandemic, especially when our weekly worship and prayer gatherings were some of the only times when I saw different people's faces and heard different people's voices, I know that worship over the medium that was still new to us, Zoom, brought me a huge amount of joy, hope, and comfort. Worship continued to bring me joy, even over Zoom, because it reminded me that while things all around us might change, God was still with us, God was still worthy of worship, we were still with each other, and nothing could separate us from the love of God.

During the rest of January and all of February there will be some extra opportunities and ways for us to experience and share joy in worship. I hope that you participate in them and are touched by them.

We are Emmanuel Lutheran Church. Worshipping God with joy!

In Christ,

Pastor Amanda

Prayer Concerns List

Susan Tomasello	Lyndsay Boysen
Bill Rapp	Tony & Sheri Nikolassy
Sam Richwine	Paul & Heather Crisafulli
Laurie Ann Friello	Jon Pierce
Mary Stevens	The Dimpel Family
Judy O'Neill	Tammie Ruda
Ann-Marie Litcof	Rebecca Sol
George Beaudoin	Danny Connolly
Bo Ruda	Jean Croll
Jovanni Sanchez-Colon	Linda Stipkovich
Micki Hein	Lisa Gugliuzza
Terry Thomas	



Thank You Notes

To my Emmanuel church family, I send my heartfelt thanks for the many acts of kindness I have received during the past year. I truly appreciate all of it, including the notes and cards from our Sunday Schoolers!

Thank you so much for making my days brighter.

Love,
Fridel Byrnes



Hi Everyone,

Thank you for the red Christmas bag. I had such fun opening all the goodies. I must say I got a big laugh over the wad of money!!! (joking) But seriously, your kindness and thoughtfulness touched my heart.

I love you all and wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Shirley Thoms



Dear Emmanuel,

We want to thank:

Pastor Amanda for everything she does and has done to keep us together!

Pastor Amanda, Gabby and Rebecca for making it possible for us to "attend" worship (via zoom)!

The members who have faithfully delivered the communion elements to our house!

The members who have kindly delivered flowers and goodies at the holidays!

The Sunday School children for their cards and pictures!

The Friday Night Live group for their thoughtful cards and greetings!

The Christmas Carolers who sang so beautifully for us!

Thank you all and God bless you in the New Year!

Louis & Helene Bier



To Emmanuel Lutheran Church,

On the morning of the 4th Sunday of Advent, we had just finished watching the zoom service, when there was a knock at the door.

I went to the door with haste (not Pastor's dog, Haste) There stood an angel from Emmanuel with a bag of Christmas cheer for us!

All the cookies, cake and candy have been eaten up, not a crumb left. All the other gifts have been put to good use. The card from the young angels of Emmanuel was very thoughtful and appreciated very much.

Thank you for this gift of joy at Christmas,

Hank and Evie Sundquist



Ascentria Gift Update

Thanks to the generosity of Emmanuel's members and friends, we provided 24 Christmas gifts for 7 children/young adults and \$350 in additional donations in the form of gift cards for young people in Ascentria Care Alliance's Foster Care program.

Jenn Torres at Ascentria, was very appreciative. She said that they use gift cards all year long as new children come into the program. She was especially thankful for our additional gift card donations.

Many thanks to everyone who donated to this collection and to Ann Frerichs, who coordinated our participation.

Altar Flowers For 2022

The 2022 Altar Flower Chart will have been posted in the Narthex. To sponsor a Sunday, please sign your name and phone number. Our Flower Coordinator, **Helen Bonaceto**, will contact you regarding the dedication and payment. We appreciate all those who help to adorn the sanctuary on Sundays with fresh flowers.

Offering Envelopes - 2022

There are still quite a few boxes of 2022 Offering Envelopes here for pickup. You can find them in the hallway outside and across from the pastor's office. Feel free to stop by during the week (Tues-Fri) when the office is open.

Reminder - 2021 Year End giving statements have been sent for your tax purposes.

If you detect any issues – please contact Kendra Lassen, our Financial Secretary. She can be reached by email at:

financialsecretary@emmanuelnorwood.org

or by phone at: 781-326-8485

Thank you for your continued financial support of Emmanuel!

Annual Congregational Meeting

Our Congregational Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 30th at 10:15 a.m.** The meeting will be held in a hybrid format, meaning that there will be a way for people to participate in person as well as on Zoom.

On Congregational Meeting Sunday, the in-person service will begin at 11:30 instead of 11:15. Both the Zoom and in-person services will be shortened to fit within approximately a 45-minute time span so that our meeting will not be rushed.

Materials for the meeting will be emailed or mailed (to those who do not use email) out during the week prior to the meeting.

Some of the items on the agenda at the meeting will be: the 2022 budget, elections for the Audit Committee, Mission Fund Team, Nominating Committee, and Synod Assembly attendees, staffing updates, and a Covid-19 response update. Please plan to be there in-person or on Zoom!

Help Fight Hunger



Once again Emmanuel's Confirmation class will be sponsoring the Souper Bowl of Caring on Super Bowl **Sunday, February 13th**. On a day when \$15.5 billion is spent on snacks in the United States, we collect money to fight hunger in our communities and around the world. Once the money is collected the Confirmation class will choose one or more hunger fighting agencies to donate to.

If you would like to donate to the Souper Bowl of Caring, you can send a check made out to Emmanuel between now and February 13th with "Souper Bowl" in the memo line. If you would prefer to donate online, you can follow this link to our secure giving site:

<https://onrealm.org/EmmanuelLuthera6070/give/SouperBowlOfCaring>

There will also be Confirmation students here at Emmanuel on the 13th after the 11:15 a.m. in-person worship service with their soup pots to collect cash and check donations.

If you would like to give food donations, our partners at Norwood Food Pantry have requested that we collect **canned fruit (no applesauce)** for our food collection this year. Canned fruit donations can be placed in the box in the Narthex anytime through Souper Bowl Sunday.

Last year we raised an unprecedented \$1,705.41 through the Souper Bowl of Caring, almost tripling what we raised in previous years. Can we beat it? Let's get out there and win the Souper Bowl!

Update from "The Piecemakers"

As much as we wanted to get an early start this year, our first session will be held on **Saturday,**



February 5, from 9 to noon. There are already many quilt tops in Kask Hall just waiting to be assembled.

For more information, you may contact Susan Lawson at lawsue51@verizon.net or at 508-259-1062.

Snow Storm Policy – New for 2021-22!

There **are** times when it is not safe or community minded for other people to venture out to come to worship.



The reality is that the church of Jesus Christ can never be closed. As long as the people of God engage in prayer for their neighbors, especially those who are put at risk because of dangerous weather, the work and worship of the church goes forward. But there are times when in person worship services can be “adjusted”.

This might not come up this coming winter (we can only hope), but if it looks like a storm is coming that will bring significant snow or other seriously dangerous weather to our area, then **worship at Emmanuel will be moved online via Zoom only.**

I will let people know about a Zoom service, by changing the phone message at church, sending out a mass e-mail, putting it on Facebook.

If you hear the words, “Blizzard expected Saturday into Sunday morning” next winter, chances are good that worship at Emmanuel will be only via Zoom! *Pastor Amanda*

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.

Worshipping God with Joy

As part of our focus of experiencing and sharing joy in worship, we are inviting you to share your stories of joy.

We would be so grateful if you would either write or tell us a story (or more than one) in response to this prompt:

I experience(d) joy in worship when:

Your story(ies) can be about an ongoing experience in worship when you experience joy (like when we sing a particular hymn or when the sanctuary is decorated a certain way or when we take communion) or it can be about a particular time or moment in worship when you remember experiencing joy. Your story does not have to be about worship at Emmanuel. It can be a story about something that happened when you were worshipping anywhere. It can be something recent or something from years ago. Your story can be a couple of sentences or a paragraph or a page or more long.

If you would like to share a story, you can email it to me at pastor@emmanuelnorwood.org. You can also hand write it and leave it in the red box outside of the office or mail it to the church. If you would like to, you can make a video of yourself telling your story (horizontal orientation). Videos should be emailed to:

elcnorwood.digital@emmanuelnorwood.org.

If your story is something that you would be willing to share as a Temple Talk in worship, please let me know that when you send it in. Your stories of joy in worship will be shared in our bulletins and emails and in the next edition of the Envoy. Videos that we receive will be shared during Zoom worship as well. Please send all of your stories in on or by **February 13th.**

Matthew 25 Fund

It's been a while since we've had a fund "drive" for the Matthew 25 Fund. That is because we didn't need to. Your on-going generosity in 2021 meant that the Matthew 25 fund stayed at a healthy amount throughout last year and enabled us to help many people over the course of the year.

In 2021, we helped several people:

- keep food on their table
- pay a month of their rent/mortgage,
- pay for car insurance
- keep their electricity on
- get their kids some small gifts for Christmas.

In a world that often tells people who are struggling "no", it is a wonderful thing to be able to tell people who contact Emmanuel in desperation often after they have heard "No" many times, "Yes. Yes, we can and will help."

As we begin 2022, the Matthew 25 Fund is getting low, because, there were a lot of disbursements from the fund in December. If you would like to donate to the Matthew 25 Fund, you can:

- write a check to Emmanuel with Matthew 25 in the memo line,
- donate gift cards to local grocery stores and gas stations,
- donate via our webpage by following this link <https://onrealm.org/EmmanuelLuthera6070/-/form/give/allfunds> and choosing Matthew 25 in the dropdown "Fund" menu.

Because the Matthew 25 fund is a discretionary fund, I am the only one who usually gets to hear the relief in people's voices and the gratitude that they express when we help them, but please know that your kindness and generosity to the Matthew 25 Fund changes lives. It pulls people back from the brink of homelessness and hunger and, perhaps most importantly, it helps them know that they are not alone. Through the Matthew 25 fund, we are able to share God's love with people in a concrete and tangible way that means so much to them. On behalf of all of the people who are helped through the Matthew 25 Fund, thank you.

Jesus said, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." ~Matthew 25:34b-36