



The Emmaus Encounter

The Newsletter of Emmaus Lutheran Church

February, 2024

Emmaus Friends,

The season of Lent is almost upon us and will begin with Ash Wednesday on February 14th. Catholic teacher Bill Donaghy has taken a humorous approach to naming

the variations of black smudges one might get on Ash Wednesday. The names include the blob (big black smudge ball), the dripster (a dripping cross smudge), the hasty (a short, smudged dash) and the Rorschach (an indistinguishable smudge up to interpretation).

What I found so funny in Donaghy's naming convention is that those of us who have received various ashes on our foreheads over the years can relate to having had received at least one of these smudge types.

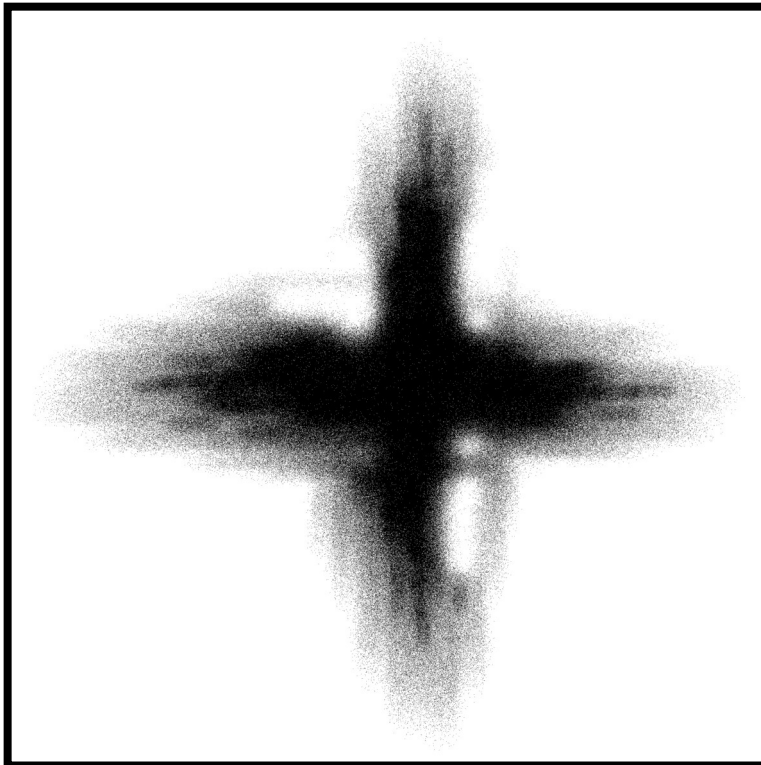
As a seminarian I've discovered all sorts of interesting things about buying ashes in the modern day. Did you know that you buy ash amounts by the number of people you intend to smudge? For example, \$5 worth of ashes can smudge 100 people. You can also buy "high" quality palm ashes (not sure how quality is defined – aren't ashes just ashes?). On a website I looked at to gage pricing for ashes, purchasers even left reviews! One review I read simply stated "as

advertised". I guess how else could you review ashes? Too funny, right?

So, what's behind the religious meaning of the ashes? Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. The ashes themselves are traditionally created from the palms of

the prior years. The ashes symbolize the grief for the death of Jesus as well as a reminder that because of Christ, death is not the end. This is why the smudge we receive on Ash Wednesday is in the shape of a cross. Ashes can be received by anyone who is seeking repentance and wants to receive God's blessing.

This year Emmaus will be hosting two Ash Wednesday services on February 14th, one at noon and one at 7:00 p.m. We hope to see you at one of them.



Yours in a Christ that heals,

Amy

Prepare Your Hearts

A Time of Preparation



The time from February to March, or the Time of Easter, invites us into the story of Jesus' sacrificial death and His glorious resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus gives proof that the salvation promised by God has

been given and that our hope for eternal life with God is secure.

Easter was the major celebration of the early church, which also set aside a period of preparation to celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord (Easter). Lent was a period of preparation first prescribed for baptismal candidates. During this period, the candidates were examined in preparation for Baptism at the Easter (or Paschal) Vigil. Later, these forty days were associated with Jesus' forty days in the desert prior to His temptation (Matthew 4:1-11) and with the forty years the children of Israel spent in the wilderness (Numbers 14:34), becoming a period of preparation for every Christian.

In Lent, we prepare our hearts to receive our crucified and risen Lord.

Lenten Practices and Traditions

- The church is decorated in violet, the color of royalty and repentance. This period of repentance is marked by a purposeful turning away from our sin and turning toward Christ for His mercy and forgiveness.
- Ash Wednesday begins the observance of Lent. Ashes on the forehead is a sign of penitence and a reminder that we, too, shall die and therefore need forgiveness from Jesus. Black may be used to decorate the church on Ash Wednesday.
- *Alleluia* is the Hebrew word for "Praise the Lord." It is a joyous expression of faith in God. During Lent, we forego using this joyous response in order to focus on our need for repentance and faith.
- Fasting is giving up eating at a particular meal or time in order to devote that time to prayer and meditation on the Word of God.

- Many churches observe Lent by gathering for midweek services. These additional times of worship and gathering around God's Word help us prepare to observe Holy Week and celebrate Easter.

Ash Wednesday Services

It's hard to believe that Ash Wednesday and Lent are just around the corner! With that in mind, you are invited to **Ash Wednesday Worship and Holy Communion on Wednesday, February 14th at 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.** (in-person and on Zoom).



These services will be a somber time of prayer and supplication, along with some musical offerings and worship led by Pastors Mary Beth, Marian and seminarian Amy Dunkelmann. The imposition of ashes on the forehead will be offered as a sign of penitence and a reminder that we, too, shall die and therefore need forgiveness from Jesus. If you are joining us from home, you are encouraged to trace the sign of the cross upon your head throughout the day and say "I am dust, and to dust I shall return." The Zoom link (meeting ID and passcode) will be sent to all the morning of the 14th (or you can call the church office at 207-781-4820).

Community Midweek Lenten Services

We are happy to announce that the Community Midweek Lenten Services will take place in-person again this year and feature Holden Evening Prayer and Soup Supper. This year the services will be held at First Lutheran Church of Portland (132 Auburn Street). This is a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with familiar friends from Trinity, First, and Emmaus. Starting on Wednesday, February 21st at 6:00 p.m. is soup, bread, and dessert with the Evening Prayer Service beginning at 7:00 p.m. Emmaus is organizing supper on March 6 and March 13, so be sure to sign-up in the narthex if you can help provide the meal.



www.emmausfalmouth.org

Where Are We Going?

Recap from the Annual Meeting



Tom said it best in his annual report to the congregation that Emmaus is sound and strong! Emmaus held its Annual Meeting of the Congregation

on January 28th. After attendance was taken (40 members were present), we heard from Council President Tom Duchesneau and each of the Committee Chairpersons.

The proposed budget for 2024 was presented in the amount of \$171,696 which represents an increase over last year of \$4,580 (or 2.7%). It was noted that the proposed budget was intentionally held flat for “Pastor’s Salary & Benefits” due to the uncertainty of calling a new pastor. Adjustments to this category may need to be made once a new pastor is called and a compensation package is negotiated. Discussion regarding the budget included fielding specific questions regarding the cleaning service, Continuing Education for the Pastor, Office Supplies, and Call Committee expense. After all had an opportunity to be heard, the motion was approved without opposition to accept the proposed budget.

Next was an unopposed motion to approve an expenditure of up to \$15,000 from the Maintenance Reserve Fund to replace the roof at the parsonage.

The estimate from “The Roofa” was for \$11,250. There is an allowance in the motion for related expenses like mold and rot remediation, and new flashing.

Tom Duchesneau and Sarah Hallan both agreed to renew their 3-year terms on Council. Ellen Wills has agreed to serve a new term. Suanne Williams-Lindgren nominated Amy Dunckelmann from the floor. The motion to ac-



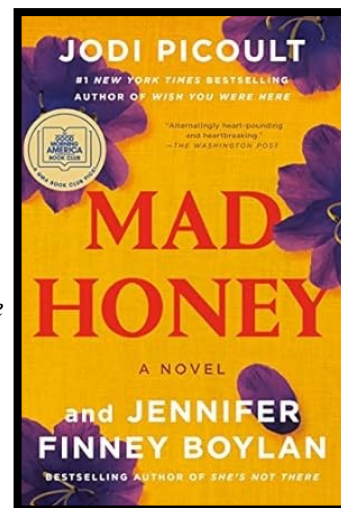
cept this new slate of councilors was (overwhelmingly!) approved.

As for other business, Carl Carlson II made a motion to return the pulpit (which is currently homed in the narthex) back to the sanctuary area. After being seconded, discussion took place from at least 12 members. After all are heard, Carl amended his motion to send the issue of the pulpit placement back to the Property Committee for evaluation of 1) the stability of the structure itself; and 2) to explore options of where the pulpit should be placed and to make recommendations. Overall, a sound and strong meeting!

Upcoming Lenten Book and Bible Study

The First Sunday in Lent will be February 18th, and that is when we will begin a book study at Emmaus on the recent novel by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan, called **Mad Honey**.

Mad Honey is a “riveting novel of suspense, an unforgettable love story, and a moving and powerful exploration of the secrets we keep and the risks we take to become ourselves,” as described in one book review. The story does involve trans individuals, and one of the co-authors identifies as transgender. As Emmaus is a Reconciling in Christ congregation, this gives us the opportunity to discuss how the novel portrays all genders and further our own sensitivity and understanding of others.



In addition to the reading discussion, we will also look at Biblical passages that tie into issues in the novel. So, book study and bible study combined! The group will be facilitated by Pastor Anne Roser. Our first meeting will be after coffee hour on February 18th. In case of inclement weather, we will zoom for the 1st meeting, with details to be provided. We will probably meet a maximum of 3 times or so during Lent.

If you wish to participate, you can prepare by getting the novel from your local library or bookstore, and start reading! Tentative meeting times will be set up at the February 18th meeting. They will be both in person and by zoom. You can contact Pastor Anne if you wish to take part, or have any questions.

Souper Bowl of Caring in February



The football contest between the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers (the Super Bowl of course!) is not the only “bowl” taking place on February 11th. The Souper Bowl of Caring is back! The Social Ministry Team and the Sunday School kids are teaming up to raise money and food donations

for St. Luke’s Cathedral Food Pantry whose work has evolved into a weekly Thursday morning 8-11 pantry which currently serves approx. 100 families. Their neighbors are diverse: long-time Mainers, new immigrants, and those facing short-term food shortages.

On two consecutive Sundays, February 4th and 11th, be sure to bring your non-perishable food items to church. The youth will be collecting your items (or cash) during worship. Let’s fill those soup pots! It’s “souper” easy!

Breakfast-for-All is February 4th

The next “Breakfast for All” will be Sunday, February 4th. Breakfast starts at about 8:15 a.m. and includes eggs, potatoes, toast, sausage, juice and coffee. Thank you to our cooks and kitchen helpers, Tom Duchesneau, Bob Gerwig, Brandon Hallen, Wayne Chadbourne, and everyone who lends a hand in the kitchen!

Next Bean Supper is February 24th



The topic for the February Bean Supper will be the Appalachian Trail. The Appalachian Trail is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world, measuring roughly 2,190 miles in length. The trail runs from Springer Mountain, Georgia, all the way to the top of Mount Katahdin in Maine. Many hiker find a spiritual peace as they hike the trail. Come along as we take a look at the Appalachian Trail, especially some of the 281 miles of the trail that are here in Maine. Some of the wildest, roughest, challenging and most beautiful sections of the trail are right here in Maine, including the 100 mile wilder-

ness. So join us and enjoy a potluck supper (with beans!) and fellowship **Saturday, February 24, at 5:00 p.m.** at Emmaus.

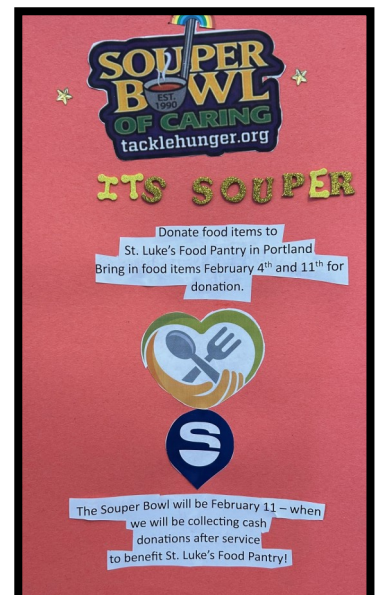
Southeast Asia Visit



At last month’s Bean Supper, Suanne Williams-Lindgren led us on a pictorial journey through the exotic ancient kingdoms of Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. She was able to visit several UNESCO World Heritage Sites (like the 151 foot-long Reclining Buddha), lotus fields, alms-giving monks in action, and “Oh, another temple!” She touched on the troubling past of these countries, and shared with us what life is like for the people who live there today. Thank you Suanne!

David Hansen and Beverly Lindahl would like to thank Emmaus for your overwhelming generosity and show of appreciation for our work! We both feel blessed to be a part of such a loving and compassionate church family!

One of the posters in support of Souper-Bowl Sunday made by the Sunday School kiddos!



Adorable Dolls of Hope!



The Social Ministry team has been sponsoring a new giving project which will come to an end on February 18th (to coincide with Valentine's Day). The stuffed dolls and bears will be sent to *Dolls Of Hope*. *Dolls of Hope* started because a mother of 5 young children believed that she could rally others to help her bring a little joy, hope and comfort into the lives of children living in a refugee camp in Northern Greece.

Believing that every child everywhere deserves to have a toy to cherish, in 2017 *Dolls of Hope* expanded their reach beyond just children living in refugee camps to any child in crisis in the United States or around the world.

Between its inception in June 2016 and the end of 2022, *Dolls of Hope* has sent 82,629 handmade dolls and bears to children in 46 countries. Don't sew? No problem! They are also accepting donations of Matchbox cars.

Where in Emmaus?

Ever seen this painting before? This artwork was uncovered recently while the Property Committee was busy ripping out all the old wall panels in the basement of the parsonage. According to the Gustavsons, it could be from the time of Preston Jones or Ed Baltzerson (they've never seen it before). Hmm. Meanwhile,



Gerry Breton has been rewiring and consolidating some of the electrical, and getting the wiring up to code. Scott Wiemer has completed the repair to the living room ceiling and upstairs closet. They found and sealed up several areas where mice have been using to get in the basement. They started to paint/seal the basement walls, and Bob Gerwig has removed all the debris. They expect a couple more months to complete the basement restoration, but it should be done by

late February or early March. Many thanks to the Property Committee and their hard work at the parsonage these past few months getting it ready for a new pastor. Be sure to personally thank Gerry Breton, Wayne Chadbourne, Bob Gerwig, and Scott Wiemer for their expertise, time, and dedication.

The Center for Grieving Children



The *Center for Grieving Children* was founded in 1987 by Portland Maine resident Bill Hemmens, following the death of his sister. In trying to find help and support for his niece Erin, Bill recognized that children need peers and caring adults

to support them through their grief, because death profoundly affects every aspect of their lives. Today, The *Center for Grieving Children*, still based in Portland, serves more than 4,000 grieving children, teens, families, and young adults annually through loving peer support, outreach, and education. Since its founding in 1987, The *Center for Grieving Children* has served more than 66,000 children, teens, and their families. Please use your designated Offering Envelope for February or note "Thankoffering" in the memo line of your check.

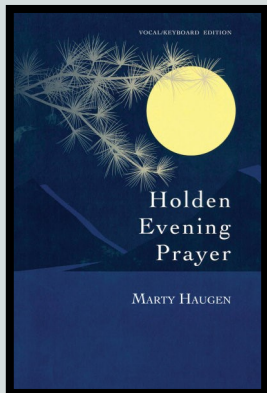


Left is a photo of the refinished wood floors and the ceiling repair and fresh paint in the living room of the parsonage. Nice work Property Committee!



Right is a photo of the refinished wood floors in an upstairs bedroom with the ceiling repair done to the inside of the closet.

Holden Evening Prayer Services

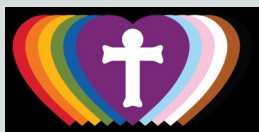


Holden Evening Prayer is a vesper service that was written during the winter of 1985-1986 by Marty Haugen while he and his family were living at Holden Village in the North Cascade Mountains of Washington State. This Service of Light offers spiritual music, lessons, and prayers that are sure to move you. Join your Lutheran community and friends each

Wednesday during Lent (beginning February 21st) at 7:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 132 Auburn Street. Soup Supper is served at 6:00 p.m. Emmaus will be organizing the Soup Supper on March 6 & 13, so look for a sign-up sheet if you would like to help.

Pastoral Concerns

Emmaus Lutheran Church is affiliated with the New England Synod of the ELCA and also a Reconciling in Christ congregation. Here we believe there is a place for EVERYONE. For pastoral care concerns, please contact Pastor Marian E. Marks at the church office at (207) 781-4820.



EMMAUS LUTHERAN CHURCH
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(207) 781-4820
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Contact Pastor—Rev. Marian E. Marks
Church Musician – David Hansen
Secretary – Beverly Lindahl



	<u>December</u>	<u>Year-to-Date*</u>
Regular Income	\$21,201	\$175,187
Expense	(\$8,370)	(\$154,232)
Net	\$12,831	\$20,955

**figures may differ slightly from Treasurer's Report*

This was a good year for Emmaus financially. Our regular giving for the year (approx. \$175,000), plus the account interest earned, came in about \$8,500 OVER budget (this does not include Designated Funds like Thankofferings and Campership Funds). Meanwhile, our expenses came in approx. \$12,500 UNDER budget, mostly due to the last few months gone without a full-time pastor on the payroll. We finished 2023 with a net gain of \$21,000.

We are blessed to have retired clergy in our parish that are providing pastoral duties to our church for nominal pay. We are also grateful to our resident Seminarian Amy Dunckelmann for opting to not take a stipend for her internship here at Emmaus. Thank you Mary Beth, Anne, Marian, and Amy!

You can always give electronically with Vanco (a one-time donation or even repeating donations) by clicking the Online Giving button below (you will need your routing number and account number—be sure to include any zeros that may begin your sequence of numbers). Most banks also offer automatic bill pay (EFTs) at no cost.

