



# The Emmaus Encounter

The Newsletter of Emmaus Lutheran Church

April, 2024

## *Dear Friends of Emmaus,*

Easter was early this year. The first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox was March 31, within a week or so of the earliest possible date. In the church though, whenever Easter falls, it isn't just a day, it's a season, a week of Sundays, so seven weeks. This year, throughout April the celebration continues. Every year, the gospel reading for first three Sundays of Easter are either empty tomb or resurrection appearance stories.

The final four weeks have readings from John which reflect more on the meaning of Easter, ultimately leaning into Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Among the resurrection appearance stories, one of the best known is the Road to Emmaus story, one which the founders of this church must have found particularly meaningful. It would be interesting to know why Emmaus was chosen as the name (maybe some of you know?) as it's not a common church name. It is however, a good name for a Lutheran church. It's a good name because, while the story can be approached from a variety of angles, it is a Word and Sacrament story and Martin Luther was very big on Word and Sacrament. His definition of the church was, "the assembly where the gospel is purely preached and the sacraments are administered according to the gospel."



In the story, it's not until the stranger on the road begins to interpret scripture that the two walkers begin to put the pieces together. It's not until he took bread, blessed it, broke it and gave to them that they finally recognized the stranger as Jesus. And then...he was gone! But...in Word and Sacrament he had given them what they needed. They had experienced the Risen Christ.

In church circles there is a lot of talk these days about the future with different visions of how the church can

continue to be relevant in a changing world. I'm quite sure that there will not be a one size fits all answer to the problem. What I do know is that whatever forms the church takes, Word and Sacrament must remain central because...that is where one encounters the Risen Christ as the Road to Emmaus story illustrates.

This year, only the aftermath of the Emmaus story is included in the lectionary (April 14). In the

midst of a call process though, a version of the story is being played out. Somewhere, there is a pastor who is on the road to Emmaus, Falmouth and there is a congregation waiting to walk with that person. Perhaps during April, the identity of that person will become clearer. May God bless all those involved in that journey and the new life it will bring.

*Pastor Geier*

"On the Road of Emmaus" ~ Art Work of He Qi

# The Season of Easter

## That's Way Too Hard to Believe



In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often too hard to believe; much like the disciple Thomas who is popularly known as “Doubting Thomas.” He, too, had a hard time believing what he had not yet seen—the holes in Jesus’ hands and feet, and the wound in Jesus’ side.

Easter is not merely a one-day celebration; it is a fifty-day season from the Day of the Resurrection of Our Lord to the Day of Pentecost. This extended season—one seventh of the church year—is a victory celebration, a time for all Christians to proclaim boldly their faith in a risen and victorious Savior.

Forty days after Easter, the Church celebrates the Ascension of Our Lord who ascended into heaven not only as God but also as man (this year it falls on May 9th). The final Sunday of the Easter season, celebrated as the Day of Pentecost (May 19th), was adopted by early Christians to commemorate the first great harvest of believers for Christ. Thus, Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian Church, as the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and they gave their compelling witness about the resurrected Lord.

Throughout the entire season of Easter, we greet one another with a hospitable Easter greeting and response: “Alleluia! Christ is risen!” “He is risen indeed! Alleluia!” Let us rejoice and be glad in the Easter season. Our Lord is a hospitable Lord and He is welcoming you!

## The Intern’s Corner



I wanted to share a spiritual practice we use at Luther Seminary at the beginning of some classes that I really like. This practice is dwelling in the Word. Most of you may know this as a version of *Lectio Divina*. Dwelling in the Word is an ancient way of reading Scripture and a deeper way of connecting with Biblical text. The practice helps us open up our faith with a willingness to be shaped by what God might want to say to us in Scripture. Through this practice, I

have had a deeper experience with the Word and thought you might too.

Here is the process:

1. Pray that God would speak to us
2. Read the text, slowly
3. Allow for silence
4. Read again
5. Allow for silence

After contemplating some time on the Word, ask yourself these questions:

- What caught your attention?
- What questions does this passage create for you?
- What do you think God might be saying to you or to us through this passage?

Here are some texts from class that we’ve used for this spiritual practice.

- Exodus 3:1-10 (Moses and the burning bush)
- Matthew 13:24-30,36-43 (parable of the weeds)
- Mark 4:1-9 (parable of the sower)
- Luke 10:1-12 (mission of the seventy disciples)
- John 15:1-11 (Jesus as the true vine)

In dwelling in the Word with classmates, I’ve been surprised how I can find different aspects of the same passages I’ve read over many times before. What do you find? Let me know...

## *In Faith, Amy*

*The colors of Easter are white and gold. White, the color of our Lord’s holiness, is everywhere on Easter, from the paraments and vestments to the traditional Easter lilies. Gold decorations remind us that our resurrection life in Christ is precious and eternal.*



[www.emmausfalmouth.org](http://www.emmausfalmouth.org)



## Our Reconciling in Christ Anniversary

On Sunday, May 19th, Emmaus will celebrate its one year anniversary of becoming an RIC congregation. Join us that Sunday for a special message from Pastor Anne and an opportunity to support this non-profit organization. Here is a refresher on why Emmaus voted to join the RIC program from team discussions that took place last Spring.

### Why is RIC important for Emmaus?

“This is what Jesus was all about - He made bridges to all kinds of people. It’s a reflection of our faith. It’s about what we are FOR not what we are AGAINST. We’ll be walking our talk.”

### When was the RIC program started and why?

“Since 1983, the RIC program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran Church. The RIC program is made up of congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, outdoor ministries, and other Lutheran organizations. The purpose of the RIC program is to ensure and welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program.”

### What is the relationship between ReconcilingWorks, the ELCA, and the ELCIC?

“ReconcilingWorks is an independently organized 501c3 organization. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) formally recognize ReconcilingWorks as an Independent Lutheran Organization.”

### What happens when a congregation becomes RIC?

“RIC faith communities are listed on the national public website found at [www.ReconcilingWorks.org/Find RIC](http://www.ReconcilingWorks.org/Find RIC). RIC partners have access to additional resources tailored to support their ministry.”

### How will we live out/embody being an RIC church here at Emmaus?

“Emmaus’ welcome is currently being lived out by using inclusive language, being friendly, and having an open communion table.”

### What are the possible outcomes for this work?

“More intentional conversations and more sense of belonging.” The time to “walk our talk” is always. Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 19th (the Day of Pentecost) when we formally acknowledge and celebrate our RIC commitment.

## Call Committee Update from Wayne



“The Call Committee has been quite active over the past several months, and I am very grateful for each member’s commitment and effort to get us to this point. We have drafted and finalized our list of interview questions and are reviewing two rostered ministry profiles (RMPs; resumes) that we received from the ELCA

NESynod. We are currently considering the two candidates and will likely be interviewing one or both at some point in April. Pastor Barter has been doing a great job supporting our committee throughout the process, and we are very grateful for that support. Please keep Emmaus and the Call Committee members in your prayers as we walk the path to discernment for a new pastor. The Call Committee is comprised of Wayne Chadbourne (chair), Emma Hallen, Beverly Hochberg, Judy Katzel, Elaine Lund, Lee Ruby and Suanne Williams-Lindgren. One request...we are trying to maintain complete confidentiality with our process, so please try and refrain from asking any of the Call Committee members detailed questions about the process. If you have any questions, please reach out to Wayne and I will do my best to answer your questions (but may not be able to). We greatly appreciate your help with this. Thank you for your prayers and support.”

*Sincerely, Wayne C.*

## Lenten Services

The community-wide Midweek Lenten Services this year were held at First Lutheran Church in Portland. Along with Trinity Lutheran and Emmaus, the services each week were collaborative with beautiful music and moving sermons. Our own *Emmaus Roadies*, along with violinist Beverly Hochberg, led the musical portion of the Holden Evening Prayer at three services with David Hansen as cantor. Thank you not only to them (Rob, Judy, Julie, Mary, Beverly and David), but also to everyone who participated in the services and provided soups and desserts. Also thank you to our clergy (Pastor Marian, Pastor Anne, and Vicar Amy) who offered the homily detailing each one's call to ministry. These offerings truly added to a weekly Lenten experience leading us to the cross and resurrection.



## Parsonage Update

The list of "Things To Do" at the parsonage is progressing nicely. Most notable are improvements to the basement which include removal of paneling, waterproofing measures, additional insulation, rodent remediation, window trimming, and a complete renovation of the laundry area. Cabinets for the laundry area are being donated by Scott Wiemer. Work is being done by Wayne C., Scott W., Gerry B., Bob G., and Dick M. The wood floors have already been refinished, the roof has been replaced, the ceiling in the living room and adjacent closet has been repaired.



The rain gutters were cleared, and new shrubbery was planted by Tom D. What a blessing to have such talent on our Property Committee, and our thanks goes out for their dedication and time spent on the project.

## Annual Yard Sale May 4th



This year's Yard Sale is on May 4th and is fast approaching. WE NEED YOUR HELP! This is a huge endeavor that takes a great deal of organization, time and effort. Thanks to Bob and Jencie Gerwig who spend countless hours getting ready for this fundraising event. ALL THE PROCEEDS from the Yard Sale each year go to fund camperships for kids attending summer camp at Camp Calumet. Camp Calumet is a resident camp (among other things) run by Calumet Lutheran Ministries on Lake Ossipee in New Hampshire. Last year, Emmaus sponsored 6 kids attending summer camp, in addition to a \$500 contribution to the Calumet Sponsorship Fund.

Donations of gently used items are needed and since many of us are doing our spring cleaning, clean out those closets and garage and donate your stuff to the church. You know the old saying, *"One person's junk is another person's treasure!"* We are collecting items and you can drop your treasures off during office hours (Tuesdays & Thursdays 8-3), Sunday mornings, or by appointment. We can also arrange to pick items up from your home if needed. We need several volunteers to help set up, work the day of, and clean up. Please let Jencie know if you can help.

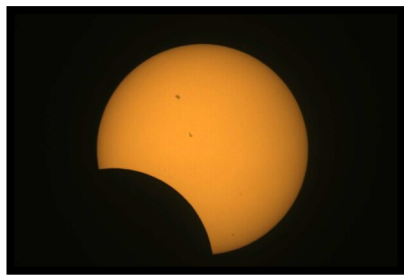


## Spring Workday—April 27th

The Spring Workday at Emmaus will take place on Saturday, April 27th from about 8-12 (rain date is Saturday, May 11th). Some efforts will be made to clean up this downed tree (shown below) that fell in our parking lot during the ice storm on March 23rd. Tom D. took a chain saw to the tree already, but clean up is needed. Efforts this spring will mostly focus on the grounds at the parsonage. Please lend a hand to the Property Committee and plan to attend this event.



## Total Solar Eclipse—April 8th



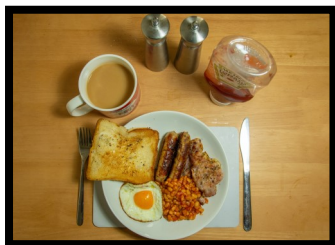
April will be quite dramatic with the long-awaited total solar eclipse passing right over northern Maine, the first total solar eclipse since July 20, 1963. The moon will pass in front of the sun on April 8th, cast-

ing a wide swath of Maine into utter darkness. Maine is uniquely situated for a front-row seat to this rare astronomical phenomenon!

The next total solar eclipse over Maine after this one will not be until May 1, 2079. That's a span of 114 years! So you won't want to miss it—a once in a lifetime opportunity to be within the path of totality in several northern counties in Maine. It is good time to pause and reflect on just how many ways God is present in our lives.

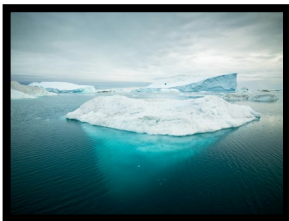
## Breakfast-for-All—April 7th

Just because we recently had a delicious brunch on Easter Sunday, that will not stop our Breakfast Ministry Team from cooking up breakfast for us again on Sunday, April 7th! Starting around 8:15, join us in



Fellowship Hall for a hearty breakfast before worship. That Sunday during worship we will hear from Pastor Warren Geier who is preaching. Thank you to our cooks and kitchen helpers, Tom D., Bob G., Brandon H., Wayne C., and everyone who lends a hand in the kitchen! This event is always the first Sunday of each month.

## Next Bean Supper—April 20th



Want to learn more about polar history and what it's like to camp in an unheated tent at the North Pole? Join us on April 20th at 5:00 p.m. at Emmaus for a Bean Supper where Vicar Amy Dunckelmann will give a

presentation on her trip to the North Pole. You can't find out if Amy saw Santa unless you attend!

## Registration Now Open for Calumet

It's time to register your kiddos for summer camp at Camp Calumet! Calumet offers 1 or 2 week resident camp sessions, and the registration form can be found at [calumet.org](http://calumet.org). Here are the weeks being offered:



Week 1 June 30—July 6

Week 2 July 7—July 13

Week 3 July 14—July 20

Week 4 July 21—July 27

Week 5 July 28—August 3

Week 6 August 4—August 10

Week 7 August 11—August 17 (music camp!)

Our Thankofferings for April and May will go to the Campership Fund, as well as the proceeds of the Yard Sale. This greatly helps to offset the costs of attending summer camp. What a great ministry!

## Synod Assembly Elections in June

The New England Synod 2024 Assembly will take place from Thursday, June 6 through Saturday, June 8 in Worcester, MA. This year is especially notable as the elections for a new bishop will be held. Rostered pastors and retired pastors can cast a vote, as well as 2

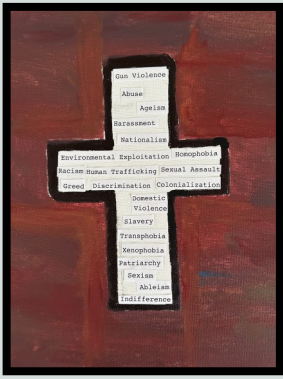


voting members from the congregation. The Synod is going through the process now of pre-identifying candidates, and biographical information will be available on the Synod website in April. Presently, Amy Dunckelmann and Tom Duchesneau are planning to attend. If you are interested and would like more information, please speak to Pastor Warren or Tom and be sure to visit the synod website at [nelutherans.org](http://nelutherans.org).

## Flower Ministry Outreach

The 2024 Flower Chart has been on display for a while now but it is woefully empty! We need more sponsors in every month. If you have a special occasion or commemoration that you would like to sponsor Altar flowers for, please sign up on the chart and let us know what the occasion is. Flowers are still only \$20 and you can bring your flowers home right after worship. Special thanks to Phyllis and Sandra Johnson for continuing their ministry to Emmaus by delivering the flowers from Skillins each week.





*Dear Emmaus Family,  
Gerry and I would like to thank you all for your love and support shown in so many ways since Matt's death. Everyone's cards, meals, phone calls,*

*emails, texts, and hugs have been appreciated. We are blessed to have such a caring church family. Matthew's Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, April 27th from 1:00—3:00 pm at The Elks Lodge #188, 1945 Congress Street, Portland, Maine. Thanks again for all your thoughts and prayers.*

*Love, Gerry and Debbie*

**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 Warren Geier at the church office at (207) 781-4820 and leave a message.



**EMMAUS LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
265 Middle Road  
Falmouth, ME 04105  
(207) 781-4820  
www.emmausfalmouth.org

Contact Pastor—Rev. Warren Geier  
Church Musician – David Hansen  
Secretary – Beverly Lindahl



	<u>February</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>
Regular Income	\$11,533	\$34,289
Expense	(\$10,680)	(\$19,533)
Net	\$583	\$14,486*

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

Notable expenses in the month of February were annual maintenance for the boiler, fire alarm and fire extinguisher maintenance, a lift service call, and a little extra for mopping the floors. Payment for the new roof at the parsonage (\$11,650) came out of the Maintenance Reserve Fund. We continue to pay our Contact Pastor weekly and the Supply Pulpit clergy as needed.



You can always give electronically through 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.

