



The Emmaus Encounter

The Newsletter of Emmaus Lutheran Church

May, 2023

Dear Emmaus Family,

Over the last few weeks the Reconciling in Christ Team and Congregation Council heard significant feedback from members of the congregation regarding the RIC Welcoming Statement and the date of the RIC congregational vote. This resulted in a meeting between the two groups on April 16th.

It was decided that, in order to educate the congregation on the Welcoming Statement, we would offer some additional cottage meetings and push back the date of the congregational vote. The cottage meetings will be on Sunday, 4/30 and Sunday 5/7, directly following worship.

These meetings will be in-person and held in the Fellowship Hall, and a Zoom link will also be provided. We will have the Special Congregational Meeting on May 21st, 2023. The purpose of these meetings is to learn about the Reconciling in Christ process, explain the Welcome Statement, and what to expect at the Congregational Meeting.

The Congregation Council has voted to make our church a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. Now, it is up to the congregation to formalize this decision.

In a spirit of Reconciling in Christ, the joint RIC Team and the Congregation Council has approved the following RIC Welcoming Statement:

At Emmaus Lutheran Church, we embrace the uniqueness of every individual and respect their dignity and worth, for all are created in the image of God. We strive to welcome everyone in the fullness of who they are. As a congregation called to reconciliation, we share God's vision of love for people of all races, sexual orientations, gender identities/expressions, socio-economic statuses, ages, abilities,

political persuasions, and personal histories. Emmaus renounces the Church's problematic actions of oppression, hatred, and exclusion. We dedicate ourselves to the ongoing work of racial equality and justice for all. Here we believe there is a place for EVERYONE. Welcome to Emmaus!

We hope you will make every effort to attend one of the RIC Cottage Meetings and that you will attend the Special Congregational Meeting on May 21st to vote on Emmaus becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation and to adopt our Welcoming Statement.



In Christ's Peace,
Tom Duchesneau
Deb Breton
Pastor Andy

P.S. Turn to pages 2 and 3 for answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

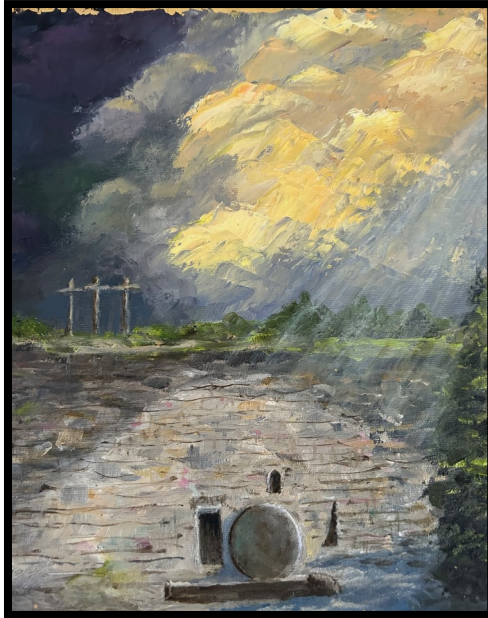
about RIC and further details about the Special Congregational Meeting and the process of casting your vote. The Zoom link to the RIC meetings is found on page 2.

**The
Dawn
Has
Come!**



The Season of Easter

Too Hard To Believe



In spite of all we have heard and all we have seen, it is often 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 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 18th). The final Sunday of the Easter season, celebrated as Pentecost (May 28th), 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. The color for the Day of Pentecost is red, representing fire and blood. Red recalls the tongues of fire received on the first Pentecost and the martyrs who shed their blood for the faith.

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!

Alleluia!
HE IS ALIVE!

FAQ’s About RIC

When was the RIC program started and why?

Since 1983, the Reconciling in Christ (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 the 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.

Why would a faith community want to be on the RIC list?

Perhaps you feel your congregation is already welcoming to all people; what difference could having an explicit welcome statement make?

1. To communicate who you are: The RIC program is one way to extend specific invitations to people your congregation names in its public welcome statement.
2. To leave nothing unsaid: Sadly, our LGBTQIA+, and Black, Brown, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) siblings continue to experience exclusion and harm from people supposedly acting in the name of Christianity. Even churches who declare “All are welcome” often demonstrate to LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC individuals and families that “All” does not include them. For this reason, the welcoming invitation RIC partners create is explicit and recognizes that injustices have occurred in the name of faith.
3. For the health of your community: Engaging in a journey of discernment to become RIC deepens and expands the faith life of the community and builds long-lasting relationships. *(continued on page 3)*



Topic: RIC Meetings

Apr 30, 2023 @ 10:30 AM

May 7, 2023 @ 10:30 AM

Meeting ID:

Passcode:

www.emmausfalmouth.org

FAQ's Continued...

Why is this important for Emmaus?

From the RIC team discussion: This 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 FOR not what we're AGAINST. We'll be walking our talk.

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

ReconcilingWorks is an independently organized 501(c)(3) 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/FindRIC. RIC partners have access to additional resources tailored to support their ministry.

How will we live out/embodiment being a RIC church here at Emmaus?

From the RIC team discussion: 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?

From the RIC team discussion: More intentional conversations and more sense of belonging.

Get the Vote Out!

As outlined on page 1, the Special Meeting of the Congregation will take place right after worship on Sunday, May 21st. Voting members must be present at the meeting, either in person or on Zoom, in order to cast a vote. A roll call will be taken to confirm a quorum of members is established and to identify those eligible to vote. Here's the Agenda.

Opening Prayer

Proposal from Council to becoming a *Reconciling in Christ* congregation and adopting the Welcoming Statement.

Open Discussion

Voting by Paper Ballot

Voting by Telephone

Results of the Vote

Closing Prayer



Members may vote "yes," "no," or "abstain" for the proposal. Paper ballots will be placed in this box (shown) and your vote will be anonymous. If you are phoning in your vote from home (by calling 781-4820) Pat Sonnenberg

will be answering the phone. After you identify yourself, Pat will record your vote anonymously. Pat and Beverly (Secretary) should be able to tally the votes rather quickly and announce the results within 10-15 minutes. The Zoom meeting will be continuous but you will be given enough time to call in your vote to the office. If you get a busy signal, please call back (we have only two phone lines). A reminder; our Constitution and Bylaws do not allow for voting by proxy.

Synod Assembly registration now open!



The New England Synod 2023 Assembly will take place from Friday, June 9 through Saturday, June 10, 2023 in Worcester, MA. They've got a great line up of presenters and preachers

for the 2023 Synod Assembly. The theme will be *A Church Born in the Tomb: Death & Resurrection in the 21st Century Church*. Among the topics to be addressed at this assembly: plans for the 2024 bishop election process, follow-up report of the anti-racism group, presentations on collaboration projects from around the Synod, and a conversation around the many ways we are seeing death, resurrection and new ways of being the body of Christ in this century. Please let Pastor Andy know if you are interested in attending the Synod Assembly in June.

Yard Sale...Here We Come!



This years Yard Sale on May 6th is fast approaching and 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 money-making event. ALL THE PROCEEDS from the Yard Sale each year go to fund camperships for kids to attend 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 and 1 Councilor-in-Training (CIT) attending summer camp.

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 persons’ junk is another persons’ 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.



Thankoffering for May

The Thankoffering for May is dedicated to camperships for Camp Calumet. Yay Summer Camp!

Breakfast-for-All on May 7th



The first Sunday in May is May 7th which means, of course, Breakfast for All! This is a great way to start your day, your week, and your month. Starting at about 8:15 a.m., join these great chefs (and also great guys!) downstairs for eggs, sausage, home fries, cereal, OJ and toast.

A Cause for Celebration

The glory of Easter Sunday was celebrated in several ways on Easter morning, beginning with an Easter Sunrise Service at the home of the Hallen’s in Cumberland. And what a beautiful day it was! Worship continued at Emmaus with strong attendance of 134 (in person and on Zoom). The music was especially moving with violin (Beverly Hochberg), *The Emmaus Roadies* (Rob, Justin, Mary, Judy, and David) and several other members (Dick, Debbie, Sarah, Mary Beth, and Ron) who took part and joined the ensemble with praise music and Alleluias! After worship there was a Celebration Brunch (photo below) including ham and various egg dishes, fruit, potatoes, and home baked goodies. The kids made quick work of the Egg Hunt and they also received a special treat from their Sunday School teachers. Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen indeed. Alleluia!

Easter Celebration Brunch



The Stations of the Cross on Display



Throughout the April newsletter and also in this newsletter are a few photos of the Lenten Stations of the Cross art project. The stations are currently on display in the sanctuary. It is especially moving to see all fifteen stations in chronological order and to read a little bit about their description

and meaning.

Artwork by The Mueller's for Station 14, "Jesus is Placed in the Tomb", is shown above.

Kits for Maine Needs Expands

Emmaus' Sunday School, Youth Group and Social Ministry are teaming up for two fun Spring projects to benefit the parents and children served by *Maine Needs*. The first project is a Mother's Day Diaper Drive! Please bring baby diapers to Emmaus (all sizes are needed, but especially size 6 (open packages welcome!) before Mother's Day for delivery to *Maine Needs*. The second project is creation of Summer Fun kits for *Maine Needs*. We hope to compile the kits on June 11 after service as part of the last day of Sunday School festivities. Summer fun kits are assembled in a pail with a shovel and are meant to encourage kids to spend time playing outdoors this summer. Items needed for the kits are frisbees, bubbles, jump ropes, sidewalk chalk, soccer ball or basket ball and kids sunscreen. Please bring donations to Emmaus for both projects. Thank you! (Proceeds collected from the Thankoffering in April will also be applied to the purchase of items needed for the kits).

Spring Workday April 29th

If you received this newsletter *before* Saturday, there's still



time and you can help! Come join the members of the Property Committee on Saturday, April 29th from 8-12 and help clean up our campus from the winter salt

and sand. There's raking and sweeping, trimming and spring plantings to get done. We will also be getting the shed ready for the Annual Yard Sale. Come lend a hand!

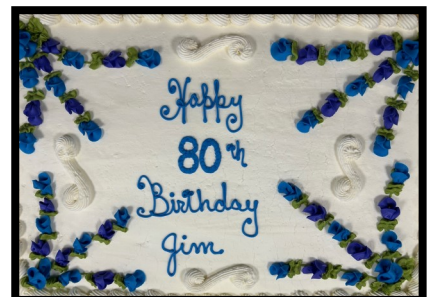


Artwork by Ron & Carole Thompson for Station 8, "Jesus is Helped by Simon of Cyrene", is shown above.

Artwork by E. C. for Station 5, "Jesus is Judged by Pilate", is shown below. If you look closely out the window of this painting you will faintly see a cross at the top of the hill. When you see this artwork in person, the cross is only sometimes visible. Very cool!



Happy Birthday to Jim Colby who turned 80 on Easter Sunday!



**Pastor Andy will be on vacation from
May 11th through May 18th.**



*Artwork by Judy
Katzel and Amy
Dunckelmann for
Station 4, "Jesus is
Denied by Peter",
is shown here.*

Pastoral Concerns

Pastor Andy Flatt-Kuntze is the rostered ELCA minister of Emmaus Lutheran Church. Pastor Andy is available in the church office Sunday through Thursday (781-4820). You can also reach Pastor Andy via email at

pastor.andy@emmausfalmouth.org.

For pastoral care concerns, Pastor Andy can be reached at (270) 781-4820.



EMMAUS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Falmouth, ME 04105
(207) 781-4820
www.emmausfalmouth.org

Pastor—Rev. Andrew Flatt-Kuntze
Church Musician – David Hansen
Secretary – Beverly Lindahl



	<u>March</u>	<u>Year-to-Date*</u>
Regular Income	\$10,394	\$56,667
Expense	(\$14,262)	(\$40,445)
Net	(\$3,868)	\$16,222

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

Income YTD is looking good due to the pre-payment of several annual pledges. Quarterly insurance was paid and cleaning expenses (cleaning expense is new for 2023). Quarterly Contribution Statements are available in the narthex. If you cannot pick yours up, it will be mailed to you in May.

***Mother's Day is May
14th!***



You can give electronically with Vanco anytime (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 offer automatic bill pay (EFTs) at no cost.

