



The Emmaus Encounter

The Newsletter of Emmaus Lutheran Church

September, 2023

Emmaus Faith Community,

The times they are a changin'. These lyrics were written and sung by Bob Dylan in the 60's during a time of political divide, advent of the counterculture and a renewed push for social justice. Although this Dylan classic was written just slightly before my time, I have actually seen Dylan perform three times. In thinking about this song, I can't help but think how the times they are still a changin' – or really have not changed - at least all that much.

Since that classic Dylan song was created, the world around us is still fraught with racism, poverty and the work to achieve social justice ever ongoing. The song, if you know it well, ends with the lyrics: "The order is rapidly fadin'/ And the first one now/ Will later be last/ For the times they are a-changin'." Sound familiar? I'll give you a hint. Mark 10:31 reads; "But many who are first will be last, and the last first." This speaks directly to the mutuality desired in our interrelationships by God's design.



Remaining active in our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) work is one way we can work to create joyful fellowship through equal regard and mutuality. Amid our own transition here at Emmaus, I challenge us to be mindful that we became an RIC church so that we can

enliven the vitality of our church community with new faces from our neighborhoods, especially members of the LGBTQ community we are so openly welcoming. Join me in inviting someone new to accompany us at Sunday worship in September. I look forward to meeting

them at Coffee Hour.

*In Christ,
Amy*

*There is much to look forward to at
Emmaus!*



Looking Forward

The Season After Pentecost Continues



The Sundays after Pentecost (also known as Green Sundays) make up the longest portion of the Church Year. This is the Time of the Church, that is the time we focus on growing together in the life of the Holy Trinity.

Since the Sunday of the Holy Trinity, we have been following the order of worship called “Common Time.” In this season we included poetry readings, special scripture readings, and even witnessed the renewal of sacred wedding vows (more about this on page 3).

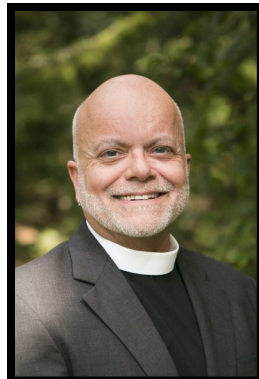
In September, we will move to a more traditional order of worship which features Musical Setting 8, a favorite of many Lutherans. We will also hear sermons from a variety of clergy members who are also members of our congregation. Breakfast-for-All and Sunday School will both resume on September 10th. There is much to look forward to at Emmaus!



A Visit with Pastor Bill

We said our goodbyes to Pastor Andy and Justin in August and they are making their way to Seattle, Washington. Beginning a new chapter for Emmaus, Pastor Bill Barter kicked things off by leading us in worship on August 27th. Pastor Bill led the congregation in conversation regarding the upcoming Call Process and to answer any questions. Here are some highlights from that discussion.

Does Emmaus need to go through the same process of selecting a new pastor as we did last? Since it has



only been three years since our last call, it has been determined that a **Contact Pastor** will be utilized (as opposed to the appointment of an **Intentional Interim Pastor**). Rev. Marian Marks has agreed to become our Contact Pastor, and has agreed to ensure that urgent pastoral care by one of our pastors is provided and to oversee ministry to the homebound, among other responsibilities.

What’s the first step? Pastor Bill will guide Emmaus through the Call Process which starts with self-study. A Transition Team will be formed to engage in discernment and to conduct the Church Assessment Tool (or CAT survey). After the results of the survey are interpreted, Emmaus will update its Ministry Site Profile (MSP) which will go off to the Synod. Then a Call Committee will be formed.

How many other churches are going through the transition process? Pastor Bill is presently guiding 4 churches through the process, and will add another one at the end of the year. Potential candidate pastors have become scarce; the ELCA interviews only 2-4 potential call pastors per month.

How desirable is Emmaus? Emmaus has a lot going in its favor, in particular its location, its parsonage, and its Reconciling in Christ (RIC) credentials. So don’t panic! It is important to not rush the process by choosing a candidate too quickly that might not fit our needs.

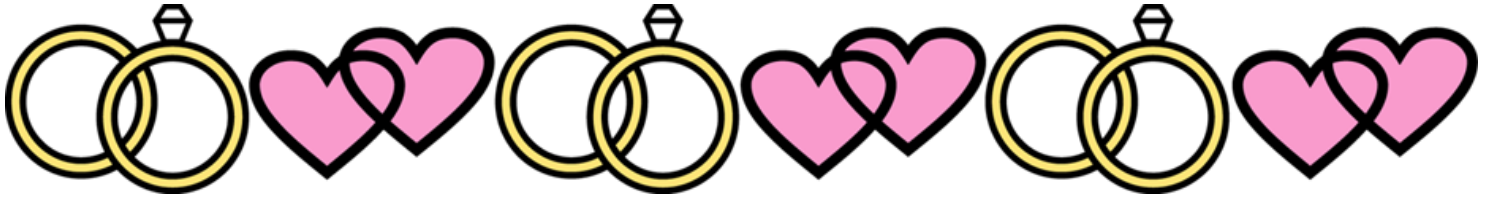
What will change in the next few months? The pastors that are members of the congregation (Pastors Anne Roser, Mary Beth Morris, Marian Marks, and seminarian Amy Dunkelmann) have already worked out a presiding Sunday schedule taking us through to the end of the year. All pastoral services will be available even in the transition.

There is much to look forward to at Emmaus!

Why is there a photo of an Apple Tree here? Find out why on page 5!



www.emmausfalmouth.org



With This Ring I Thee Wed

If you missed church on August 6th, you missed a special witness to the renewing of wedding vows for Ron and Carole Thompson. Their wedding anniversary is actually in September (their 55th) but they wanted to share this event with Pastor Andy and the congregation. Ron and Carole renewed their wedding vows in the presence of their kids, Dawn and Chris, and surrounded by the family of Emmaus. It was a marriage encounter of the most special kind! Congratulations!

Love Is In the Air

We also learned that in August Dick and Beth Miller celebrated their 27th wedding anniversary. Dick and Beth are now off on a mini-vacation to Canada. In addition, Scott and Susan Wiemer celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on August 22nd (and are also blessed with a new grandbaby born August 21st). Congratulations!



A Testament of Love

Babette and Bartholomew O'Dwyer recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at home. Bartholomew provides round-the-clock care to Babette, his 94-year old wife, who can no longer walk, speak, or feed herself.

Babette has been a member of Emmaus since 1996. Five years ago she suffered a stroke and never recovered. Her health declined rapidly, and Bartholomew has been caring for her from a hospital bed set up in their living room since 2018.

There is no explanation for why Babette is still alive, other than for the selfless care of her husband, Bartholomew. The dedication and persistent care and attention of Bartholomew has almost certainly been a factor in her longevity.

We learned more about Babette and Bartholomew when a feature story appeared in the Maine Sunday Telegram in August. The article highlighted the power of love and the effect love

can have on one's outlook and wellbeing. Babette's health is no longer declining, and she is not losing weight.

Bartholomew feeds Babette all her meals and makes sure she takes her medications. Sometimes he just sits with her and holds her hand while they watch TV.

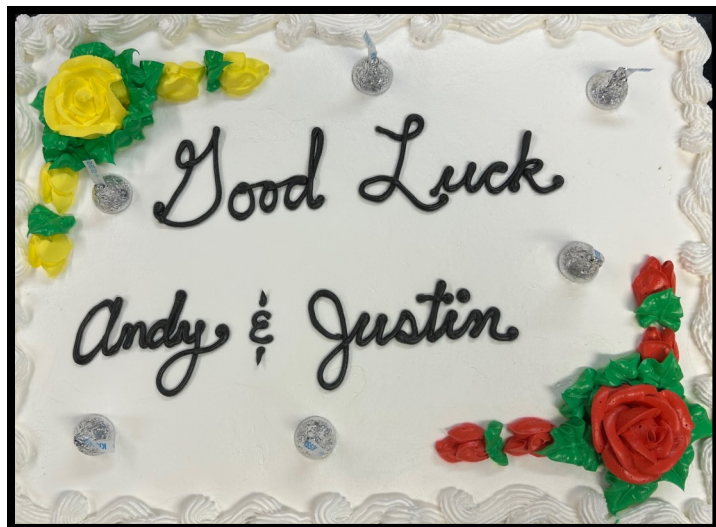
The O'Dwyers married late in life and didn't have children. Bartholomew is steadfast to honor his wedding vow: In sickness and in health, providing love and care for Babette 24/7.

Emmaus has been praying for Babette for several years now in our Prayers of Intercession. We will continue to hold Babette in prayer, and we will add Bartholomew to the prayers as well.

Bartholomew will continue to feed, bath, clothe, sing to, and lovingly care for Babette. To have and to hold, for as long as they can be together.



Farewell and Godspeed



Late in July, we heard that Pastor Andy had accepted a new call to serve as Lead Pastor of the University Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington. Sad news for Emmaus, but also a wonderful opportunity for Pastor Andy and Justin to venture out in growth and faith. As Pastor Andy said in his recent letter to the congregation, *“The Holy Spirit is incredibly persistent.”*

Interesting choice of words. *“Persistent”*. Hmm. Persistence also means tenacious, determined, insistent, dogged, stubborn, tireless, steadfast, enduring, lasting, relentless, continuing, constant, permanent, remaining, and unshakable, to name a few. Not only can these words be used to magnificently describe our Holy Spirit, they also sound a lot like and describe beautifully the people of Emmaus Lutheran Church! As evidenced through these past few years of trials and tribulations (a global pandemic), our congregation surely has held onto one another as the united Body of Christ.

God has a plan for Emmaus Lutheran Church. We look forward to a new plan for our congregation as we move toward a new chapter as well. As Tom so aptly pointed out in his letter to the congregation, “God already knows who our next Pastor will be! And in the months ahead, God will lead us to our new Shepherd.”

I thought of a few examples of *“persistence”*, alive and well here at Emmaus Lutheran Church. When I think of Altar Guild, I think Steadfast. Acolytes—Remaining. Coffee Hour Volunteers—Tireless. Gardening & Mowing—Tenacious. Ushering—Enduring. Committee Members—Determined. Council Members—Unshakable. Audio/Visual—Constant. Maintenance—Continuing. Garbage Haul—Resolute. What an untiring and resolute congregation that makes up the “persistence” of the people of Emmaus!

Pastor Bill is a familiar friend to Emmaus, and also the Associate to the Bishop and our New England Synod representative. Pastor Bill has already met with the Congregation Council, and also had an opportunity to preach and conduct a Q&A regarding the Transition Process (page 2). In the coming months, our worship will be led by many of our own membership: Pastor Anne Roser, Pastor Mary Beth Morris, Pastor Marian Marks, seminarian Amy Dunkelmann, and Pastor Bill Barter. We also are blessed to have strong lay leadership in Ron Thompson, Suanne Williams-Lindgren, and Amy Dunkelmann.

We give thanks to God who is always with us and pray God’s peace will accompany us all in our faith journey ahead. There is much to look forward to at Emmaus!

Beverly Lindahl

Breakfast-for-All Resumes Sept. 10th



It seems only fitting to have our tradition of Breakfast-for-All return to Emmaus on Sunday, September 10th—the same day as the start of Sunday School. Beginning around 8:15 a.m., come join the breakfast crew downstairs for eggs, sausage, home fries, toast, juice and coffee. Spend some time in fellowship with a warm breakfast, then come up to the sanctuary to fill your heart and soul in worship!

Sunday School Begins September 10th

Starting on Sunday, September 10th, our Sunday School Class will begin for children ages 5-12. The classes will be led by Sarah Hallen and Jencie Gerwig. The kids will start the morning in worship with their parents and then leave for class downstairs right after the Children’s Sermon (around 9:20-9:30). This year the teachers will be using curriculum specifically designed to coincide with the lectionary, helping to explain to the kids why we do what we do, and when we do it. Sparking new faith in Christian roots and growing in Christ!



Upcoming Commemoration

Holy Cross Day, Thursday, September 14, 2023



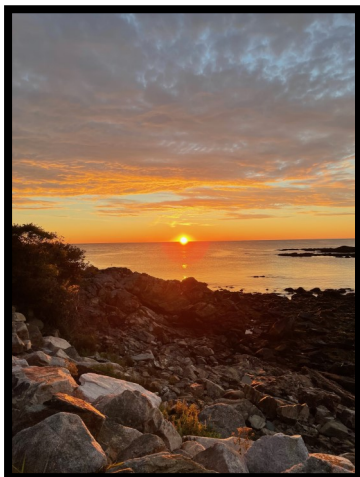
Helena, mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and found what may be the actual site of Jesus' crucifixion. Her son built two churches there, and the dedication of one of them gave rise to this celebration of our Lord's victory on the cross.

Apple Pickin'

The parsonage is now vacant and the Property Committee is in the process of prioritizing their "To Do" list. Notably, with all the rain we've had this year, is the overgrowth of the grounds. Bob Gerwig has already begun the weeding process out front, and he discovered several blueberry bushes and an apple tree just loaded with fruit. All are welcome to the picking! The apple tree is a Red Rome Semi-Dwarf and produces small apples perfect for pies, baking, or apple sauce. What's left of the blueberries (after Bob ate some!) are ready to harvest. Is rhubarb coming into season? There may be some of that coming soon too! Help yourselves to the harvest.



Gone Fishing



Our Secretary, Beverly Lindahl, will be out of the office for vacation in September, but she's not really going fishing (no one believed that!). It's a trip a long time in the making to Croatia. This vacation was planned for 2020, but we all know what happened that year! So now it's time to go to Croatia before the passport expires. Beverly will be out of the office from September 9

thru 20. If you need pastoral care or have an emergency during that time, you can contact Pastor Marian Marks at pastor.marian@emmausfalmouth.org or you can leave a message in the church office at 781-4820.

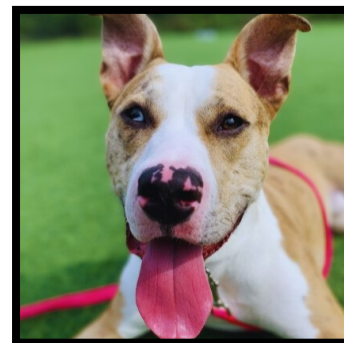
Thankoffering for September



Meet Bailey, a 7-month old male (neutered) dog up for adoption at the ARLGP. What's that you ask?

ARLGP is the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland, a non-profit, Maine animal shelter serving more than 4,000 homeless and displaced animals annu-

ally. Bailey is only one of many dogs and other types of animals available for adoption. Others are Carl, a 1-year old (neutered) dog up for adoption. Abbott (shown below), is a 3-month old male (neutered) cat. The Animal Refuge League nurtures the connection between people and pets to advance animal welfare and improve the quality of life in our community. To find out more about the adoption process, visit their website arlgp.org.



You don't have to adopt a pet in order to help. You can support the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland by making a monetary donation to the Thankoffering for September. You can use your specially marked Giving Envelope for September, or just write "Thankoffering" in the memo line of your check.

Kittens and Mittens?

This kitten named Abbott is reminding you to start your mittens! Each year Emmaus provides knitted hats, mittens and scarves by way of the "Mitten Tree" at Christmastime for *The Root Cellar*. Although store-bought items are always welcome, the best ones are handmade! So pull out your yarn and your knitting needles now and start stitching those hats, gloves and scarves for the December Mitten Tree.



"Start knitting those mittens!"

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!



Pastoral Concerns

Emmaus Lutheran Church is affiliated with the New England Synod of the ELCA. For pastoral care concerns, please contact Pastor Marian Marks in the church office at (207) 781-4820.



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

Contact Pastor—Rev. Marian Marks
 Church Musician – David Hansen
 Secretary – Beverly Lindahl



	<u>July</u>	<u>Year-to-Date*</u>
Regular Income	\$11,599	\$111,154
Expense	(\$13,564)	(\$100,707)
Net	(\$1,965)	\$10,447

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

Expenses in July came in just under budget by \$189. The year-to-date income vs. expenses is holding strong at a little over \$10,000. Remember this is thanks to several large pledges for 2023 that have already been paid in full. Pastor Andy will continue to be paid through September 10th (his last day at Emmaus was August 20, and then he will be compensated for his remaining three weeks vacation). Pulpit supply pastors through the end of the year will be paid \$200 per Sunday, and the Contact Pastor (Rev. Marian Marks) will be paid \$150 per week plus mileage.



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.

