



The Emmaus Encounter

The Newsletter of Emmaus Lutheran Church

November, 2023

Dear Members of the Body of Christ at Emmaus,

Recently in worship, Pastor Anne gave a sermon based on the Gospel of Matthew 22:15-22. *Here the Pharisees and the Herodians are trying to entrap Jesus with a controversial question "Is it lawful to pay taxes, to give to the emperor?" Jesus, aware of their malice, said "Show me the coin used for the tax" and they brought him a denarius with Caesars' likeness on it. Jesus responds "Give back to Caesar what is his, Give back to God what is God's."*

God oversees the entire cosmos, and yet is still in our midst. Our very existence, all that we have and know, everything we are, belongs to the One whose image we bear. Give back to God what is God's, says Jesus, and we are left to ponder the enormity of that task. We who are beloved of God, claimed in baptism to be image bearers of justice, kindness, and humility are called to give back to God and to our neighbor. We who have that limitless grace poured upon us are called to be people of grace. This is the heart of who we are. God in our midst.

In the upcoming stewardship season we will be pausing to notice some of those gifts within ourselves and our communities, hoping to see what God might be up to in our midst.

As we consider the many ways we offer ourselves and our time, we encourage you to notice how others in our congregation and community are making an impact by being the person God created and called them to be. Soon in worship you will be given a couple of suggested activities for prayerful reflection. Take the activities home and ponder the possibilities. Pray. It is our hope that your responses to these exercises will reveal a deeper picture of how individuals, or the entire congregation, are using their gifts to serve others, both in this moment and in this place - anything that represents them

being who they are in ways that positively shape our common life. God in our midst.

Your responses to the activities will be due the week following when they are assigned in worship. Write down your responses and bring them back to worship or mail them into the office (or email) if you can't make it in person. As each individual gift is shared, we will begin to see a deeper picture of the ways God has created and called us as a whole faith community.



As we look then at what we are being called to in this place and time, we will have an opportunity to offer our financial resources to support the ministry to which we have been called. You will be receiving shortly in the mail a pledge card, or estimate of giving card, to return to church either in worship or by mail. Prayerfully consider a percentage of your income to offer to the church in the coming year. Then join us on Consecration Sunday, November 19th, for a special celebration luncheon right after worship. All are welcome.

Throughout these weeks we will be reflecting in worship and in other parts of our ministry about this question of the gifts we are being called to share. We hope you will pray about this and join us as we celebrate God's movement among us; God in our midst.

In Christ, Gerry Breton, Carl Carlson III, Wayne Chadbourne, Beverly Lindahl, Rev. Marian Marks, Pat Sonnenberg, and Ron Thompson

To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.

Deuteronomy 10:14 NIV

Our Rich History

All the Saints of Emmaus, Circa 1920



The custom of commemorating all of the saints of the church on a single day goes back at least to the third century. All Saints Day celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who make up the body of Christ. On All Saints Sunday, November 5th, our congregation will remember the faithful members of Emmaus who have died during the past year. They are Carol Carlton, Sandy Svenson, and Elsie Moreau, as well as all the other saints who have gone before.

Where Does Our Synod Money Go?

Congregational Mission support is the primary way in which congregations collectively support the ministry of the New England Synod and the ELCA. The Synod's budget is made up of 98% from congregational support. The remaining 2% is from individual donors. The 2022 budget was \$1.2 million.

Approximately 65% of funds received from congregations are used in New England for the following:

- ◆ Starting new congregations
- ◆ Supporting existing congregations
- ◆ Providing leadership of call processes
- ◆ Partnership support to Calumet, United Lutheran Seminary, Campus Ministry, etc.

- ◆ Resourcing of congregations for outreach, stewardship, worship, education
- ◆ Conflict resolution
- ◆ Recruiting and training new candidates to become Pastors & Deacons

The remaining roughly 35% is sent on from the New England Synod to the ELCA offices and used for the following:

- ◆ Global Mission
- ◆ Colleges, Schools and Seminaries of the ELCA
- ◆ Outreach, Evangelism, Education, Worship Resources
- ◆ Starting new congregations in other parts of the country
- ◆ Ecumenical and Inter-faith Relationships
- ◆ Legal and Administrative resourcing



www.emmausfalmouth.org

Summary of Emmaus' CAT Survey



We are pleased that 55 people took the time to complete the CAT as part of the work we are doing to prepare ourselves for the call process - thank you! Given that we received a very detailed 28-page report from the consulting firm administrator, we've decided to present a short readable summary of its highlights here. For those of you wanting to immerse yourselves in its detail we will be emailing it to everyone in the congregation.

If you want to, you can tune into the recording of the report provided to us by Synod Representative Rev. Sara Anderson. You can do so by going to:

<https://vimeo.com/871276357/4e5b3da80d?share=copy>

As a Congregation we've identified the following as our key drivers of member satisfaction: The extent to which...

1. Our services are exceptional in quality and spiritual content.
2. We do a good job supporting people in ministry by reminding them they are making a difference.
3. Our Pastor's sermons engage people with life enriching messages.
4. Our Pastor presides over worship with care, engaging people in a meaningful way.
5. Our Pastor helps us accomplish our mission by bringing out the best in people.

What drives our level of excitement in the church? You said it's worship services that are exceptional, and that we change our church program from time to time to meet the needs of its members.

Reviewing the data, we see some nice improvements! Kudos all!

- ◆ Regarding our hospitality we're doing well with how welcoming and friendly we are to existing and new members as well as the care and concern we extend to one another in time of need. And many of you said it would be helpful to learn more about how to greet new people.
- ◆ Our church style has shifted from being more conservative and settled to being one that's more progressive and adaptable. We've developed more flexibility in our willingness to make adjustments in the way we go about our ministry.

- ◆ The music aspect of worship and music scored very high! It's outstanding. And with that, it looks like we have a bit of an opportunity to enhance how our worship services are viewed in terms of quality and spiritual content.
- ◆ While our energy-satisfaction with how things are has also increased since 2019, we have more opportunity to address a variety of critical success factors outlined in the report (e.g. relevant preaching, excellent worship, preaching with integrity, etc.). Note: these are based on we say we are wanting/need NOT based on any internal issues that were identified.
- ◆ Morale-wise a high percentage tended to "agree- strongly agree" that you're satisfied with how things are going and feel like our congregation spirit makes people want to get involved.
- ◆ Emmaus's governance, decision-making structures and processes seem to be well regarded. While you said persons serving as leaders are representative of the membership and ask for input, you also said it's the same small group of people making most of the decisions- an opportunity!

Growth wise the top 3 priorities are the same as what we identified in 2019 - attracting families with children and youth, creating a strategy to reach new people and provide more opportunities for Christian education and formation at every age and stage of life.

"Call Town Hall" Meeting-November 4th

The Ministry Site Profile Committee ("MSP") is excited to have you join them for a hybrid "Call Town Hall" on Saturday, November 4th, starting at 10:00 a.m. If you are unable to join online, you can join the team in-person at Emmaus to participate. Here they will take a deep dive into the future of Emmaus and who you want our next pastor to be. Specifically they will discuss 3 main topics; 1) the Emmaus Identity, 2) the Emmaus Experience, and 3) A New Pastor. The findings of the discussion will be compiled and be available for review and comment on Sunday, November 5th.

Look for a letter this week to the congregation from the MSP team. Electronic documents including the CAT summary and an excerpt from our 2019 MSP profile will also be available.



Confirmation Sunday



It was on Reformation Sunday that we witnessed and celebrated with Danica and Avilene their Confirmation, as they affirmed the promises made for them at their baptism. The entire congregation came up from the pews to surround these new members into the Body of Christ. We pray that the Holy Spirit will forever fill their lives with faith and a love for Jesus Christ.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will forever fill their lives with faith and a love for Jesus Christ.

Harvest Community Supper Recap

The following is a letter to all the Falmouth Community Churches from Nancy Lightbody (an event organizer)...

“Even though we never dreamed this year’s Community Supper would turn out this way, you were still there for your congregants, sharing caring thoughts and opportunities for prayers. These past few days have been



so sad, yet I have heard from some of our volunteers that they did, in fact, share squash and/or turkey with their neighbors and had a good time doing it.

I also heard that volunteers at Saint Mary’s free Souper Supper last night were able to hand out turkey, gravy, cranberry sauce, and peas that had started out in the Falmouth Congregational Church kitchen. Those volunteers are understandably exhausted now, but the 45 people who enjoyed the free dinner are very appreciative!

Please be sure to thank members of your churches for being so willing to help with whatever was needed. And thank you for your continuing support of the Community Supper over the years: I look forward to seeing you next year!”

~Nancy Lightbody

Landing Step Completed

The Property Committee organized a Fall Workday at Emmaus last month. First priority was to pour a new concrete step at the landing from the fire escape. Well, they can now check that one off their To Do list! Actually, this turned out to be a joint effort over several days. Scott Wiemer constructed the framework and purchased the Quikrete.



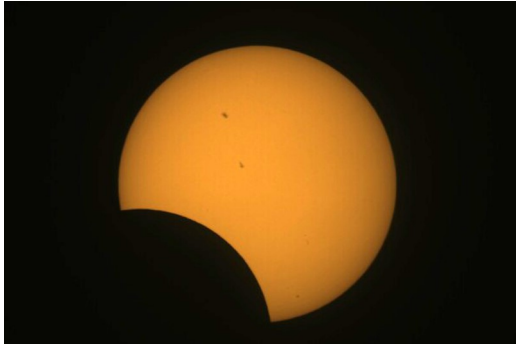
Bob Gerwig and Tom Duchesneau mixed and poured the concrete into the frame. Beverly Lindahl played the role of the water girl (i.e. I poured buckets of water into the concrete; I didn’t have to provide water breaks!). Bob and Scott did the finish work, and now it looks great! The warm stretch of weather turned out to be a blessing. Carl Carlson III came to the workday to rake leaves and Tom provided some much needed pruning and weeding. Gerry Breton arrived to supervise (Gerry’s out of commission due to shoulder surgery!).

As for the parsonage, Wayne Chadbourne is initiating an effort to have the wood floors downstairs refinished. Next in the line of priority is to have a roof leak fixed before (eventually) putting on a new roof. The ceiling in the living room also needs to be scraped and repainted, among other smaller projects. These repairs will be the focus in the next few months while a search for a new pastor is carried out.



A Big Thank You to All Who Helped!

An “Annular” Solar Eclipse



On October 14th, the moon moved exactly in front of the sun from the point of view of the observers in its path. This style of eclipse is called an annular eclipse, as annular

means ring-like. The “ring of fire” effect happens when the moon, which appears smaller in the sky because its’ further away from Earth, passes directly in front of the sun. Maine, not in the path of annularity this time, experienced a partial eclipse in which only part of the moon covers up the sun, making the sun look like it’s had a bite taken out of it. The photo above was taken by Ron Thompson using a tripod and a special solar filter to protect the camera.

A “total” solar eclipse will occur next on April 8, 2024, when the moon will completely cover up the sun, and viewers from Maine to Texas will be in the path of totality. Mark your calendar! If you miss that one, the next total solar eclipse visible won’t occur until August 23, 2044!

It’s That Time Again!



The first Sunday in November is also the end of Daylight Savings Time. Be sure to set your clocks back one hour before bedtime. But just in case you forget and you arrive to church one hour early, there’s breakfast! Beginning

around 8:15 a.m. on November 5th, come join the breakfast crew downstairs for eggs, sausage, home fries, toast, pastries, 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!

Middle East Crisis

Due to escalating conflict in Gaza and Israel, a severe humanitarian crisis is rapidly unfolding in the Holy Land. The ELCA has a longstanding relationship with partners in the region, including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and Augusta Victoria Hospital. Lutheran Disaster Response has a history of providing support for our partners and will be prepared to answer calls for assistance when the time comes.

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has issued a letter of solidarity to Bishop Dr. Sani-Ibrahim Azar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. In it, she writes,

“I encourage the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to unite in prayer for the families of innocent civilians whose lives were lost, as well as pray for healing for all the injured, fearful and traumatized.

“I pledge our accompaniment and support to you as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and its ministries provide ‘critical and timely assistance (psychological and otherwise) to those affected by this war.’”

Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response equip us to respond to this and other disasters, whenever and wherever they strike. Gifts designated for “Middle East Crisis” will be restricted to and used in full (100%) for those affected by disasters in the region.

The Thankoffering for November is Lutheran Disaster Response. You can use your specially marked Giving Envelope, or just write “Thankoffering” in the memo line of your check.

Watch for the Angel Tree to Appear! Emmaus is going to have the Angel Tree again this year for gifts for the children/families of the Root Cellar. Watch, and wait, for its appearance is coming soon!





The Call Process is actively underway! Here are the members of two key Committees:

Call Committee

Wayne Chadbourne, Emma Hallen, Beverly Hochberg, Judy Katzel, Elaine Lund, Lee Ruby and Suanne Williams-Lindgren.

MSP Team

Ellen Wills (Chair), Debbie Breton, Kelly Chadbourne, Jencie Gerwig, and Sarah Hallen.

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 Marks at 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 E. Marks
 Church Musician – David Hansen
 Secretary – Beverly Lindahl



	September	Year-to-Date*
Regular Income	\$9,055	\$131,063
Expense	(\$18,874)	(\$131,119)
Net	(\$9,818)	(\$56)

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

Don't get too concerned over the "poor" month. Income was slightly lower for September than the previous year, but the high expenses are a little bit misleading. 1. The pastor salary and benefits include all of August PLUS the 10 days pastor was paid in September in order to make the wrap-up date cleaner; 2. Emmaus prepaid our Contact Pastor \$750 for the first 5 weeks; 3. Emmaus paid \$450 for the cost of the CAT assessment; 4. Quarterly insurance payment was made; and 5. Annual payment for security and monitoring to Cunningham Security was paid.

The "Pastor Salary and Benefits" section will be very low for the remaining months of 2023, with the exception of the weekly Contact Pastor allowance.

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.

