



Emmanuel News Notes

May, 2009

Pastor Lookingbill ponders.

There's so much to do in May every year! After Easter, there's going to be a blossoming of flowers and trees, grasses and weeds in the yard and garden. So, you can plan on spending some time, or money for landscapers, on the house and yard! There's also the college graduations, the high school proms and then high school graduations, the end of the semester exams, papers and moving schedules as well as the sports! At Church there will be the Annual Meeting for Elections, Youth Sunday on Mother's Day and then the Confirmation celebration on Pentecost! What about that summer job, summer camp and vacation plan? What about the summer reading list? Is there a summer wedding that you have to celebrate this year?

Are you too busy for Church this spring? Among all the responsibilities we share in this busy environment, Church sometimes seem like just one too many things on the list! How often do I hear from members that Sunday is the "only day" that I have to sleep, to relax and to compose myself! All those things are important, and I heartily endorse their practice. Yet, I would add that Church and worship at Church is one of the best ways to invigorate your life at the beginning of each week.

All right, Church is not the best place to sleep, although some take time to practice that too! But Church is a very fine place to join with a group of Christian folks who share the values of Christ and the Christian community, to relax from the constant pressure of the week's work and to compose oneself with prayer and gratitude to God for our blessings.

Sometimes members of Emmanuel feel that God is not listening carefully enough to their concerns and petitions. It is in the context of our worship life together that we assure one another that our Lord is listening, and that we need to listen too! The Gospel and the other readings from scripture tend to turn our minds again to the importance of community, of family, of integrity and compassion. When Jesus tells us that the Good Samaritan was good, not because of his family or the color of his skin, but good because of his compassion for another child of God, we too are challenged to think about our experiences of compassion and opportunities to share a sympathetic moment with someone we know. When Jesus speaks of the Good Shepherd, the One who is ready to give his life for the sheep, we are awakened to the Lord of life who has already given us that moment of loving grace that wipes away all tears and fears!

The hour (plus driving and parking, maybe a cup of tea or coffee?) that is spent in Church on Sunday is as important as the hour you shower and dress, preparing for the day and week. It is a period of time that is "dressing" you for your encounter in the world, God's world, a world that is filled with distractions and disappointments. Where do you get the energy to consistently encourage your children, your spouse and your parents to live up to the high calling of the Christian faith? Where do you get the quiet hope that all that we do in this life is making a difference in the lives of others? Where do you get the assurance that God is with us, if not in Church? The bed welcomes our tired bodies; the Church welcomes our search for strength to meet our friends and workers in the world.

When one of us in the congregation doesn't "feel like Church today," when one of us doesn't "feel like singing songs of praise today," or doesn't know how to cope with the stress of the economic picture in our economic plan, or doesn't "feel like listening to another story from the Bible," it's just then that the rest of us go to Church to meet the children of God there. That's just the morning to sing so that others can hear the songs of praise, to pray for others so they are encouraged to cope with pain and disappointments, to listen to the Bible stories so that we can all remember that our Lord Jesus lived among us, still lives among us and knows our trials every bit as well as we experience them. After all, Jesus knew that he would be betrayed, that he would die innocently, but die nonetheless, that he could place His life in the strong hands of our Father in heaven, who created the heavens and the earth!

With such love and trust, we also live these busy days of May! Welcome to the worship life of Emmanuel, a time and place that "dresses us" for every week!

In Christ's Service,

Jan P. Lookingbill, Pastor

DATES OF NOTE

- May 2 WELCA workshop
- May 3 Congregational meeting
- May 7 Study with Har Shalom (page 2)
- May 16 Car wash (page 6)
- May 27 Fun Bunch (page 2)
- May 31 Confirmation
- June 7 Joyful Praise Cantata (page 3)

WORSHIP

Sunday 8:30 & 11:00
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE ENCOUNTER WITH MARK

Pr. Lookingbill will continue the challenging study of the Gospel of Mark through the Easter season and into early June. As read from a political point of view, Mark is a dynamic story of Jesus at work in a world that needs healing, vision and God's power breaking in! Jesus is the Son of God, teaching about the Kingdom of God among the people of God. Join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Christian Education room; bring a lunch and enjoy a favorite dessert by one of the members of the group.

WEDNESDAY EVENING SPRING STUDY

Pr. Lookingbill is continuing a spring study each Wednesday evening based on Karen Armstrong's book, *The Bible: A Biography (Books that Changed the World)*. In this 2007 publication, the historical Bible is surveyed as it developed from oral history to canon for one third of the people on the planet. From obscure and mysterious beginning, the Bible has become the best selling and best known of the books of civilizations. Join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 for supper and 7:30 for a study of this intriguing Book that most of us have in our homes and yet hope to understand better through shared study. Both members and friends of Emmanuel are welcome to join us whenever they can.



SPRING FESTIVAL AT THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN HOME SATURDAY, MAY 2

Come and enjoy
GRANDMA'S ATTIC
CRAFTS, FOOD TO EAT
BAKE SALE, BOOKS
SILENT AUCTION
AND
THE HOME'S USUAL
FUN AND FROLIC

INTERFAITH STUDY WITH HAR SHALOM CONCLUDES ON 7 MAY

Rabbi Leonard Cahan and Pr. Lookingbill will conclude their Interfaith Study on Elijah and Elisha at Emmanuel on Thursday, 7 May at 7 p.m. in the Christian Education room. At the last meeting, echoes of these two prophets were traced into the Gospels of the New Testament. In Malachi, the final prophet of the Christian Old Testament, the "Messenger" points to a future in which Elijah, the reconciler, will bring parents together with their children once again! Join us in May for our next session as we deepen our understanding of the impact of these two visionary prophets and their influence on Judaism and Christianity.

CONFIRMATION WILL BE CELEBRATED ON PENTECOST, 31 MAY

The nine members of the 2nd year Confirmation Class will be confirmed on Pentecost Sunday 31 May at the 11 a.m. Worship Service. Prior to Confirmation, all nine of the members of the class will need to meet with Pr. Lookingbill to review their experience over the past two years, demonstrate their knowledge of the Small Catechism and talk about their spiritual journey. Upon approval of the Church Council, the Confirmation Class will join the roll of adult and confirmed members of Emmanuel with the great celebration on Pentecost Sunday. The congregation is encouraged to join with the confirmation families in this joyful Pentecost and the reception in the Fellowship Hall following.

Fun Bunch

May 27, Tuesday, 11 a.m.

The Fun Bunch will head over to the National Botanical Gardens in Washington, D.C. We will plan on having a "cold-cuts" lunch nearby afterwards. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex by the beginning of the month.

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Pastor:
Youth & Family Ministry
Council President
Parish Administrator
Director of Music
Joyful Praise (Children's) Choir

Rev. Jan P. Lookingbill
Rev. Robert L. Lewis
James McGee
Katherine Burrell
Dingwall Fleary
Susan Drumm

MOTHER'S DAY WOMEN'S WELLNESS COLLECTION BENEFICIARY : N STREET VILLAGE NIGHT SHELTER AND WELLNESS CENTER

When a woman becomes homeless, there usually are hard-to-fix problems. Three of the major ones are mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence. Where can a woman find help?

One place is N Street Village's Night Shelter. The shelter assists 30 women who have agreed to work on their problems with a case manager. The shelter provides 6 to 12 months of housing, dinners, and educational and supportive services. Another place is N Street Village's Wellness Center. The center provides health and mental health services, including dental care and vision services.

In honor of Mother's Day, Emmanuel will be aiding the women served by the Night Shelter and the Wellness Center. We'll be collecting supplies needed for the women in those facilities. Please consider the Wish List below and bring an item or two to church with you on May 10 or 17. We'll be receiving the supplies in the narthex. Thanks in advance for your donations.

WISH LIST - the Night Shelter and Wellness Center particularly needs:

- basic household cleaning products (Lysol, Windex, Comet, bathtub cleaner)
- over-the-counter medication
- nail clippers
- deodorant
- bus tokens/Metro cards
- new sheet sets -new towel sets
- dish detergent -laundry detergent
- mattress protectors



JOYFUL PRAISE CHOIR TO SING

Mark your calendars now for June 7th! The Joyful Praise Choir will present their end-of-year cantata "It's Good!", a story about creation. Needless to say, the children have found a new way to tell this well-known story, and everyone will enjoy the songs and the story. Please support all the choir's hard work by coming to worship at the 11:00 service.

IMPORTANT "CIVIC" EVENTS THAT AFFECT EMMANUEL AND THE SYNOD

Congregational Meeting for elections and

programs: The Annual Meeting for Elections and Programs on 3 May at 10 a.m. (between the two services) Members are urged to attend and participate. Read the annual reports and vote as informed persons.

The Annual Assembly of the Metropolitan

Washington, D.C. Synod: The Synod Assembly will be at Galludet College 8-9 May with delegates appointed by the Council: James and Donna McGee, Kevin Adams, Patti Leppert, Robert Lewis, and Pastor Lookingbill.

Meeting of the Montgomery Conference of the

Synod: To prepare for the Synod Spring Assembly in May, the Montgomery Conference, meeting at Prince of Peace on 4 April, elected The Rev. Sarah Lewis as the new Dean of the Conference, beginning with her installation at the Synod Assembly. Pr. Lewis is the Pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Derwood.

Dedicated, Indomitable, and Generous: Elizabeth Weisburger

Dr. Elizabeth Weisburger, a member of Emmanuel's family, was asked to give a few remarks at a national meeting of toxicologists in Baltimore in March. The occasion was the inaugural presentation of a scholarship Dr. Weisburger had been instrumental in establishing. It was a pleasant day and she decided to take a stroll in downtown Baltimore. Somehow, either missing her footing or misjudging a step, she fell, hitting her face on the concrete and wrenching a knee. She returned to her hotel, iced the knee, tended to her scrapes, and then went to the meeting where she addressed women toxicologists and congratulated the awardee. On Sunday, she didn't attend services being reluctant to parade her facial bruises to the world, but then thought better of it, donned enormous sunglasses, and attended the Bach birthday concert (Great Organ Mass) of the Bach Choral Society.

Elizabeth has long been active in professional affairs and has received both the Hildebrand Prize and the Garvan Medal from the American Chemical Society. In addition, she has established scholarships and endowed laboratories at her alma mater, Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pennsylvania. Recently she has been nominated to serve as an "ACS Fellow" representing the Society to the U.S. Congress.

Pentecost: The Church's Birthday

The feast of Pentecost is one of those enigmatic holidays that we recognize that we should know more about, but never seem to gather the information necessary to appreciate it. It has a complicated history and is full of wonderful imagery.

The Jews celebrate the giving of the Law fifty days after the feast of the Passover. Indeed, that is probably why the disciples of Jesus were gathered together ten days after the Ascension. It was the feast of Shavuot and it was then that the tongues of fire descended upon the disciples and the Holy Spirit was made manifest in them as they spoke and all present understood them in their own language regardless of where they came from. Peter must have been rather stunned to have to tell those gathered that the speakers were not drunk at nine in the morning.

It is from that event that the Church began, first as a loose association of believers, gradually becoming a living entity which persists to today.

Pentecost (a Greek word meaning fifty days) is the name usually given to the day. English folk have known this as Whitsunday and the season following as Whitsuntide. There is some disagreement as to why it was called that. One theory is that it is from the white clothing worn by those baptized on Pentecost, another is that it is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *witan* meaning knowledge or wisdom. Whatever the source, nowadays the altar color for the day is red attesting to

From the Council President:

Greetings

April and spring is supposed to be a time of hope and renewal. Easter and the celebration of the resurrection of Christ offer us the hope of salvation that is the basis of our shared faith.

Baseball offers us the hope that this will be the year that everything turns around. Or, if you are a Phillies fan like me, the year that everything comes together again. I am told that for Yankee fans spring is not a time of hope, it is one of expectation.

In the life of the congregation, spring is also a time of hope. Our church programs cycle with the school year. Our Christian Education programs pause for the summer – with the exception of the Adult Discussion group on Sundays. Attendance at worship falters during the summer months.

At the Congregational meeting we reflect on the successes of the past year and express our hopes for the coming year.

We will also remind you of our ongoing financial struggles. Offerings through March are down almost 7% from last year. At the Congregational meeting we will have an update that includes offerings from Easter.

We will also remind members to try to keep up their offerings through the summer months. The Simply Giving program is one way to do that. See the information on our website www.elcbethesda.org.

During the summer, we always need to dip into designated reserves to pay operating expenses.

We may need to make some painful decisions again next year if offerings don't improve.

But for now, we remain cautiously optimistic. This time of year hope springs eternal, both in baseball and at Emmanuel.

Enjoy!

Jim McGee

1920Jimmy@gmail.com



Remember our
Offering Need

[Like so many things these days, this piece came floating in on the Internet, author and source unknown.. Perhaps there is a lesson contained within it which may be valuable for us all.]

AIN'T

He was just a little boy
On a week's first day
Wandering home from Bible school
And dawdling on the way.

He scuffed his shoes in the grass;
He even found a caterpillar.
He found a fluffy milkweed pod
And blew out all the 'filler.'

A bird's nest in a tree overhead
So wisely placed up so high,
Was just another wonder
That caught his eager eye.

A neighbor watched his zig zag course
And hailed him from the lawn;
Asked him where he'd been that day
And what was going on.

'I've been to Bible School ,'
He said and turned a piece of sod.
He picked up a wiggly worm replying,
'I've learned a lot about God.'

'M'm very fine way,' the neighbor said,
'for a boy to spend his time.
'If you'll tell me where God is,
I'll give you a brand new dime.'

Quick as a flash the answer came!
Nor were his accents faint.
'I'll give you a dollar, Mister,
If you can tell me where God ain't.'



Christian Education Notes

SUNDAYS

Sunday School - 10 a.m. in the Atrium and Classrooms

The pre-K to sixth grade Sunday School classes will meet in the Atrium at 10 a.m. with opening songs and prayers. The seventh and eighth grade classes will meet in room 10 for a look at the week's scripture lessons and how they can be viewed in light of the previous week's events. The High School class will meet in the youth room and begin a study using movies, contemporary music and TV shows.

5/3 Regular Sunday School Lesson *during Annual Programs Meeting at 10:00am*

5/10 Regular Sunday School Lesson

5/17 Last Day of Sunday School – Closing Party - Sunday School Children's Program during the 11:00am service, along with Teacher Appreciation

5/24 No Sunday School Lesson – Memorial Day Weekend

5/31 Confirmation Sunday

6/14 Church Picnic following 11:00 service

Bible Study - 10 a.m. in the Parlor

Kristi Johnson and Diane Swenson are continuing the Adult Bible Study during the Sunday School hour. You are welcome to join them anytime. Grab your cup of coffee and bring a Bible.

Adult Forum - 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

The Adult Forum is an opportunity to have a Christian discussion on the issues of the day. All are invited.

CONFIRMATION

The Confirmation Classes meet on Monday afternoons from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m.

May 4 Regular Confirmation Classes

May 11 Regular Confirmation Classes

May 18 Regular Confirmation Classes - Last day of Classes

May 29 6:30 p.m. Confirmation Dinner at Thronson's

May 31 Confirmation Sunday - be at the church by 10:00 a.m.

Other Christian Education Opportunities

Wednesday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Lookingbill 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch and enjoy a discussion on the Book.

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL

We will have a "one-room" Sunday School/Funday School each Sunday during the summer starting June 21, 2009 for pre-k to sixth grade. During these events we will have songs, arts and crafts, Bible stories, interactive activities, games and more. Each Sunday/Funday School day is a "stand alone" activity; therefore, if you miss one week, you will not feel left behind when you return.

Parish Vital Records

Births

Gillian Rose Cowan MacKenzie, born 31 January 2009 to Matthew and Dianne Cowan MacKenzie, granddaughter of Rhoda and Jim MacKenzie

Andrew Lane Jurgovan, born 24 February to Keeley and John Jurgovan, grandson of Mary Ann and Roger Jurgovan

Ada Elizabeth Ghanadan, born 12 March to Rebecca and Hamid Ghanadan, friends of Floyd and Sally Swenson

Adam Bay and Dylan Tate Hardy, twin grandsons of Helen Hardy

New Member

Luke David Pynchon, 26 April 2009, son of Karin and Bryan Pynchon, by infant baptism

Deaths

Michael Fanok, 14 March 2009, brother-in-law of Kit Clements

Martin Vogel, 17 March 2009, father of Jon Vogel

Crystal Huhn, friend of Pr. Lewis' family

J. D. Punch, 25 March, friend of the Salive family

Electra Quillin, 25 March 2009, grandmother of Lesley Einwaechter

Robert D. Tarr, 5 April 2009, father of Ted Tarr

Lois Mertens, 5 April 2009, wife of Albert Mertens, sister-in-law of Caroline Hass

Sidney Miransky, 5 April 2009, friend of Debbie Brown

Elwyn Sands, 18 April 2009, uncle of Jan Phillips

Graduates of 2009: Information Please

Please let the church office know about individuals graduating this year. We have an idea of the High Schoolers, but are more or less in the dark about those who are receiving degrees from colleges, graduate schools, and professional schools. Has your graduate found a job? Is further study in the offing? What is happening in the lives of our fledgling friends?

Young Adults Website

There is a new Young Adults website at dcyoungadults.org. This is the Synod's new site with blogs about life and faith, calendar of young adult events, and networking.

Do You Tweet?

Do you use Twitter? If so, you can follow Pastor Robert Lewis on Twitter, his screen name is "ALCES." Curious what alces means and why he uses that name? Twitter him and find out.

Car Wash

May 16, Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Bring out your cars, vans and trucks for the Car Wash in the church parking lot on Saturday, May 16, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Donations will be accepted, with a suggested donation of \$10 for cars and Minivans and \$15 for truck and large vans. The proceeds go toward the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering.

Rent-A-Teen

Need help with yard work? Have some simple jobs around the house that have not found time in your busy schedule to do yourself? Could you use an extra set of hands with your to-do list around the house? **Have no fear, Rent-a-Teen is Here!** The youth who are attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering are raising funds for the trip by "renting" themselves out to help you with your odd-jobs. The youth will work in pairs for \$12 an hour. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex after Easter and through the month of May. You can also contact Pastor Lewis to make arrangements to Rent-a-Teen.

Change for Change

Do you have a jar of pennies that you have not had time to wrap? How about car ashtray full of coins? Or a piggy bank full of change and you do not know what to do with it? Bring it into the church and dump it into the "Change for Change" bucket. This change will go toward helping change the social and environmental conditions in and around New Orleans, a city that is still trying to recover from hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The twelve youth who are traveling to New Orleans this summer will be involved in mission work that will help the environment and social climate of New Orleans and the parishes (counties) that surround the city.

Pastor Lewis considers .. death

In a conversation with my brother about the Masters' golf tournament held on Easter weekend. I threw up my hands at one point and said, "Doesn't anyone keep Easter sacred any more?" Jeff informed me that NASCAR does not race on the Easter weekend so the drivers and crews can be home with their families. I was told about the race that was rained out on a Saturday night several years ago and the NASCAR officials were being pushed by the sponsors and TV network to start the race at noon on Sunday. With the threat of suits and sponsors pulling their advertisement from the TV coverage if it was not started at noon, NASCAR stood by their decision for a mid-afternoon start so the drivers, crews and fans could go to church.

Impressive. I have a higher opinion of NASCAR now. I still think of it as really fast cars making left turns, but some of my opinions about it have changed. But there is much more there. Some would say that NASCAR is so popular because of the possibility of wrecks, injury and death at over 100 mph. But it is really the opposite. It is popular because these racers are cheating death.

Saint Paul was also someone who did death defying acts. In 2 Corinthians, Paul lays out a litany of his near-death experiences on the road for the gospel, but while he was not a thrill-seeker taking all this on by choice, he didn't shy away from these experiences, either. He seems to have developed a theology of death that was neither cavalier nor obsessive. He was instead focused on the long view of death's eventual irrelevancy — a coming day when everyone, from race fans to righteous disciples, will be able to say, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Corinthians 15:55).

For Paul, the model of this life is Jesus, who died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and was raised for them. It is for that reason that Paul can write one of the most wonderful lines in all of the New Testament, "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Note the present tense, meaning that the transformation is happening now, not back then, not in the future - but now!

Although the narrow escape of death holds a fascination for humans, Paul made it clear that it was the actual death of one man that enables all to cheat death forever. Jesus did not cheat death by narrowly escaping it or by spiritualizing it. Jesus went through death itself, in a public spectacle that makes racing and other sports look positively lame by comparison. He experienced the cold reality of the grave, but the good news for all of us is that He came out on the other side to a new life - the life in which He seeks to lead us through his example, His abiding Spirit and in the promise of His bodily return. It was His death, and not a victory over the Romans in a race for power, that drew people to His cause.

In this life there will always be thrill-seekers pushing the

envelope and fans standing by to cheer them on, vicariously joining them in looking death in the face. However, only one person has truly looked death in the face and beaten it. If we want to really cheat death in the end, then let us be more than just His fans. Let us be His followers.

PAX,

✝ Pastor Robert L. Lewis, Jr.



Doll House Raffle

Yes, beautiful new homes are still being built! A great way to help our youth make the trip to New Orleans for the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering is to purchase raffle tickets for the hand-crafted doll house that has been donated to Emmanuel. This would make a great gift for your child, grandchild and future generations. It is completely ready for the lucky winner to furnish it and move in.

Tickets are \$10 for one, or \$25 for three. The drawing will be held on June 14, 2009 during the church picnic. You do not need to be there to win. For more information contact Pastor Lewis.

2009 Youth Gathering Finances

The team that is going to the 2009 Youth Gathering would like to thank you for your continued financial support. With your help, we have been able to reduce the amount that we still have to raise from \$5003 to \$3070. This amount includes our plane tickets, the second part of our registration fees and other transportation. We hope that you continue to support us by donating your loose change, coming to the car wash, and buying tickets for the Doll House Raffle in order for these twelve youth to learn more about church leadership, stewardship, and discipleship.

Youth and Family Ministry Calendar

This calendar includes all Youth and Family Ministry Events, not only those for youth. Events advertised for "Youth" include those from 7th grade to 12th grade. Family events or "everyone is invited" are appropriate for all ages. Fun Bunch events are for older adults.

May 1, Friday, 6 - 7 p.m.

Meeting for those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering

This is a mandatory meeting for all those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans. We will go over information about our focus issue while we are in New Orleans, the environment. We will meet at the Hunleys' home located at 8206 Kenfield Court in Bethesda.

May 1, Friday, 7 - 10 p.m.

Lutherpalooza 2009

Lutherpalooza is for high school in the Metro DC Synod's Montgomery Conference. We will meet at Trinity Lutheran in North Bethesda. We will have an Ugly Shirt Contest, so wear/bring your ugliest shirt (t-shirt, bowling, whatever!). Trinity Lutheran is located at 11200 Old Georgetown Road in Rockville.

May 3, Sunday, 10 a.m.

Congregational Meeting

All youth and families should attend the annual meeting. Youth who have been confirmed are voting members of the congregation.

May 10, Both Services

Youth Lead Worship

The youth will lead both worship services. All youth are needed to help with the service.

May 16, Saturday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Car Wash

All youth should come out to help with this car wash which will take place in the church's parking lot. Youth can earn SSL hours. See write-up elsewhere in this issue for more details.

May 17, Sunday, 10 a.m.

Meeting for those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering

This is a mandatory meeting for all those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans. We will be continuing to go over information about our focus issue while we are in New Orleans, the environment. Meet in the Church Youth Room.

May 17, Sunday, 11 a.m.

Celebrating Sunday School Year

During the second worship service we will celebrate the Sunday School year and honor our Sunday School teachers. Students from Pre-K to High School will share some of the things they learned during the year.

May 27, Tuesday, 11 a.m.

Fun Bunch Trip to the National Botanical Gardens

The Fun Bunch will be taking a trip to the Botanical Gardens in D.C. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex at the beginning of the month to indicate if you need a ride or if you will be a driver.

May 29, Friday, 6:30 p.m.

Confirmation Dinner

The second year confirmands and their families are invited to a dinner at the Thronsons' home, located at 9209 Farnsworth Drive in Potomac, MD.

May 31, Sunday, 11 a.m.

Confirmation

During the second worship service, the second year Confirmands will Affirm their Baptism. Everyone is invited to come and celebrate this milestone in these young people's lives.

June 5, Friday, 6 - 7 p.m.

Meeting for those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering

This is a mandatory meeting for all those going to the 2009 Youth Gathering in New Orleans. We will be going over information about our focus issue while we are in New Orleans, the environment. We will meet at the Hunleys' home located at 8206 Kenfield Court in Bethesda. You are then invited to stay afterward for fun and fellowship.

June 7, Sunday 6 p.m.

Dinner Club Pot Luck

This is the final meeting of the Dinner Club before summer starts. Everyone is invited to attend and bring a dish to share. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Mark Your Calendar

June 14, Church Picnic

June 16, ELCA Youth Gathering Meeting

June 21, Commissioning of Work Camp Participants

June 28 - July 4, Chi Rho Work Camp

Youth-Gathering Team Meetings

Those who are going to the 2009 Youth Gathering will have several mandatory meetings as we get ourselves spiritually and mentally ready. We will also have some team building exercises.

The dates and locations that are scheduled for us to meet at this time are:

May 1 Friday, 6 p.m. at the Hunleys' home

May 17 Sunday, 10 a.m. in the Church Youth Room

June 5 Friday, 6 p.m. at the Hunleys' home

June 16, Tuesday, 6 p.m. at the Hunleys' home

The meetings at the Hunleys' will be 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. You are invited to stay after the meeting for fun and games. The Hunley's home is located at 8206 Kenfield Court in Bethesda.



Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life.

-LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN



I continue to accept the thanks and congratulations from the members of Emmanuel for outstanding music heard during the Lenten and Easter seasons. And I am grateful to all the individuals who make up Emmanuel Ringers – the Adult Choir, Joyful Praise, and, of course, the fine instrumentalists who joined us, for the extra time and efforts they dedicated toward achieving the successful musical results.

There are no major music highlights during May – well, except for the fact that Youth Sunday on Mother’s Day will feature many of talented children, including Joyful Praise. But I urge you to mark your calendars to be in attendance on the first Sunday of June when special presentations will enhance both services. June 7 has been designated Music Appreciation Sunday. At 8:30 the Emmanuel Ringers will play as a full ensemble, their last appearance for this church season. Then, at 11:00, the annual end-of-the-season cantata by Joyful Praise, under Susan Drumm’s direction, will be the centerpiece of the service. They, and the Adult Choir will be honored for their service. It will be an exciting morning!

Even though we are approaching the summer season when the various choirs take a short “vacation”, I am anticipating there will be special music from time to time. I must again make a plea to current members of our church family to seriously consider lending your God-given talent to continuing and strengthening the music of Emmanuel. As always, the music ministry is in search of *new participants*. Even with the best of intentions, from time to time it becomes necessary for current members of both Emmanuel Ringers and the Adult Choir to divide their time between the duties of the church with the demands of their families and their personal lives. As a result, because the numbers are small to begin with, when such occasions arise, it often becomes difficult to provide music in the way Emmanuel and I have become accustomed. Another factor which concerns all of us is the reality that because significant numbers of especially our singers are reaching ages which forecasts discontinuing extra activities and commitments such as regular participation with the choirs. It is now more and more necessary for new individuals to add fresh faces and a new life to these programs.

Although I have said something similar in previous columns, it is important to reiterate that the rewards of singing and/or ringing the praises of God can’t be measured against such terms as *convenience*. The current ELC musicians have schedules as complicated as anyone else’s. Yet, they rehearse, sing and play every week. They do so with thanks to the God who gave them the talents to share the love they have for Him. Not only will you feel good about giving to others through your service – you’ll have a fun social experience as well!

Until next time, Dingwall Fleary
dingwallfleary@verizon.net

This month sometimes has surprises for us in this area. Some years, the first heat of summer arrives. In others, it has been cool and wet. Whichever May of 2009 becomes, it will be a month of beauty. The final glories of the azaleas and rhododendrons, the irises, and peonies will grace the gardens and fledgling birds will be daring to fly with the encouragement of nervous parents. School will draw ever closer to the end of term and both students and teachers are eager for it to happen.



May brings days of celebration, honor, and remembrance. In many parts of the world May 1 (May Day) is a day to honor the workers. In days of youth long gone by, May Day was the day to surprise one’s sweetheart (more likely one’s hoped-for sweetie) by hanging a basket of flowers and candy on the intended’s doorknob, ringing the bell, and hiding to observe the wonderment when the intended discovered the treat. Does anyone make May baskets anymore? Does anyone get them? It seems a shame to have lost an innocent delight—but, then, Hallmark never commercialized it, either.



CONGREGATIONAL ECONOMICS 101

How shall we cope with the economic problems of today? Who knows what personal agonies we may face as a result of the economy’s present turmoil? The answer, of course, is that none of us knows exactly. Some will claim that Washington is more or less immune to the economic woes of the country. In part, that may be true, but like so many generalizations, it is not especially accurate in the specific instance. If you lose a job, the area’s purported immunity would seem to be a seriously weak reed to support your family.

The congregation can look forward to continued support from its members, but that support may well be at levels lower than the current budget demands. Prudent and responsible judgment is, thus, required of our Council and our staff. And that is not all. Caring, thoughtful, and responsible giving is required of each of us members. Concerned members, prudent leaders, and responsive staff are all partners in maintaining the ministry of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda.

Prayer sometimes seems the only way to balance a checkbook, but prayer at that point is a bit behind reality. Prayer for guidance before disaster strikes may be the more disciplined and disciple-minded approach.

EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

7730 Bradley Boulevard
Bethesda, Maryland 20817

Phone: (301) 365-5733
Fax: (301) 365-9236
Email: info@elcbethesda.org

Jan P. Lookingbill, Pastor

Robert Lewis, Pastor
Youth & Family Ministry

James McGee, Council President
Katherine Burrell, Parish Administrator
Dingwall Fleary, Director of Music
Susan Drumm, Joyful Praise Choir
Ligia Benjumea, Nursery Attendant

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