



EMMANUEL NEWS

January 2015

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Each Day we Begin Anew

“Always we begin again”, the words of St. Benedict. Benedict lived in a time of great turmoil in the world. It was chaos. Benedict’s Rule is a way of living following Christ in community. It is a way of daily living even in a world of uncertainty. This Rule has been life giving and life saving for sixteen hundred years. At the heart of the Rule is what he called “conversion of life,” a way of continuing the work of our own conversion. Benedict knew that we Christians are far from perfect. He also knew that to be a Christian meant we must continue to grow. If we do not our hearts turn stone cold. Each day is an opportunity to begin anew. How may we do this? Here are just a few of the ways.

If we can, and this requires some attentiveness, as we wake realize God’s presence in our life. We can thank God for the beginning of this day, a new day, another beginning. Throughout the day develop the habit of realizing God’s presence. A simple way to do this is to have a short prayer, even as short as, “Lord Jesus.” Christ is with us in all of the ordinary things. Even as we wait at a traffic light: silently utter the prayer. A day punctuated this way transforms, converts us. In the early evening if we take a few moments to relax and let yourself know that God is with you (and also with all of those we encounter in our day). At the end of the day as we are about to fall asleep we may breath gently and utter the words silently. If we live alone we can do it aloud. It is not crazy it is just another way to help us grow in Christ.

Contact us:

Emmanuel Episcopal Church

P O Box 231
12th Avenue and Lake Street
Alexandria, MN 56308
320-763-3201

Sunday Service: 10 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Adult Bible Study: 9 a.m.

Pastoral Care: Contact

Tom Sinning, Deacon, or
Edith Kelly

Support Staff/Newsletter:

DeAnn Runge

episcopal@centurylink.net
drunge@embarqmail.com

Godly Play Director/Teacher:

Verlie Sinning

verlieb@nbnnet.com

Vestry:

Karen Reicks	Sr. Warden ('16)
Mark Reicks	Jr. Warden ('15)
Wendy Zander	Treasurer ('15)
Sheila Stanton	('15)
John Hull	('17)
Mary Sinning	('17)
Rachael Sinning	('15)

Delegates to Region and Convention:

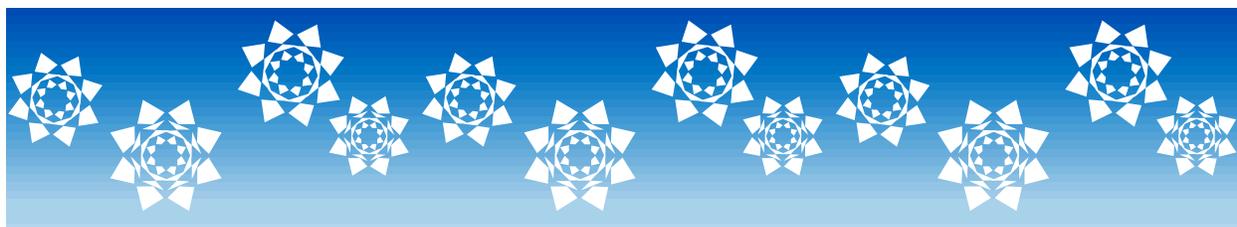
Rev. Tom Sinning, Deacon
Laird Barber
Alternate: Belvin Doebbert

Small acts of kindness make a difference. When we give to others, no matter how small, it makes a difference for us and to whom we make the gift. For example, a brief note to someone in need, to someone to say thank you. Emails are better than nothing, but a hand scripted note is something another can hold and keep. I am amazed at how thankless we have become. As Christians that is not our way. To say thank you to another is to say thank you to Christ. To say thank you opens us to God's love. It is transformative.

The secret of all of this is that God is already present with us, loving us, calling us beloved. If we can do these little things, it allows us to experience the love of God in Jesus Christ. In all of these our lives are more deeply converted into following Christ.

All of these little things are ways to be more intentional, and also more naturally Christ centered. Little things make a real difference in our lives. We cannot stop. Our conversion must not stop. Each day remember, "always we begin again." Happy New Year.

- Charles William Preble+



Senior Warden Report – January 2015

By this time, you have received the Stewardship letter. This letter reviews what Emmanuel has done in 2014. Included with the letter was a pledge form. Your pledge helps us to make a budget for next year. Please consider what you can give to Emmanuel and return this form by January 11. Thank you.

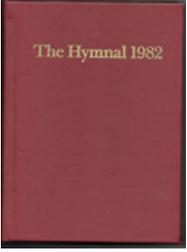
The Annual Meeting will be held on January 25 immediately after the service. The annual meeting is where we discuss the goals and plans for our church. The budget is set for 2015.

Please try to attend this meeting so you can have input into the future of our church. Lunch will be provided.

Please call Karen at 320-808-6484 if you have any questions.

HYMN OF THE MONTH

By Tim Johnson

The image shows the cover of 'The Hymnal 1982', which is a dark red or maroon color with the title 'The Hymnal 1982' printed in a small, light-colored font at the top left.

Hymnal 1982 #117 “Brightest and best of the stars of the morning”

Words: Reginald Heber (1783-1826)

Hymn Tune: Morning Star, James Proctor Harding (1850-1911)

As was the case with December, the music committee is temporarily continuing the practice of focusing on the current season of the Church Year rather than the calendar month as a basis for selecting a Hymn of the Month for the beginning of 2015. Whereas the choice for December was actually a “Hymn of Advent”, the title for January is a “Hymn of Epiphany”. Once more, as the Christmas Season extends through January 4th this year, we will be singing “Brightest and best of the stars of the morning” for a shorter period involving the three remaining Sundays of this month.

The author of the hymn text, Reginald Heber, was born into a wealthy and well educated English family. As an exceptionally bright child, he was translating a Latin classic into English verse at age 7 and entered Oxford University at age 17 where he achieved two awards for his poetic compositions. Shortly thereafter, he entered the priesthood and became the Rector of his father’s parish in the West of England. In 1823, he was appointed the Bishop of Calcutta, a position which he took very seriously. Unfortunately, his tireless work, extensive travel, and the region’s climate took a great toll on his health and he died of a stroke at the early age of 43. Heber is credited as the author of 57 hymns which are still in use today. Six of these titles are included in the Hymnal 1982 and one of the most well-known of these is “Holy, Holy, Holy” (Tune name Nicaea).

Once again, research revealed little regarding James Proctor Harding, the composer of the tune Morning Star. In fact, there are biographical disagreements as to his name (some sources refer to his first name as “John”) as well as his year of birth. The Hymnal 1982 lists it as 1850, but in other sources it appears as 1859 and 1861. In any case he would have died a relatively young man as was the case with the author of the text. It would also stand to reason that this is one more case where a different tune was originally associated with this hymn as Heber’s lifetime would have predated that of Harding. 35 years of his life were spent as organist and choirmaster of St. Andrew’s Church, Islington, London.

“Brightest and best” is yet another time honored hymn. Its lyrical melody should prove easy to learn for the singer who may not be familiar with this title. We hope that it will become a welcome addition to our growing hymn bank!

Sources:

http://www.hymnary.org/person/Heber_Reginald

http://www.hymnary.org/person/Harding_James

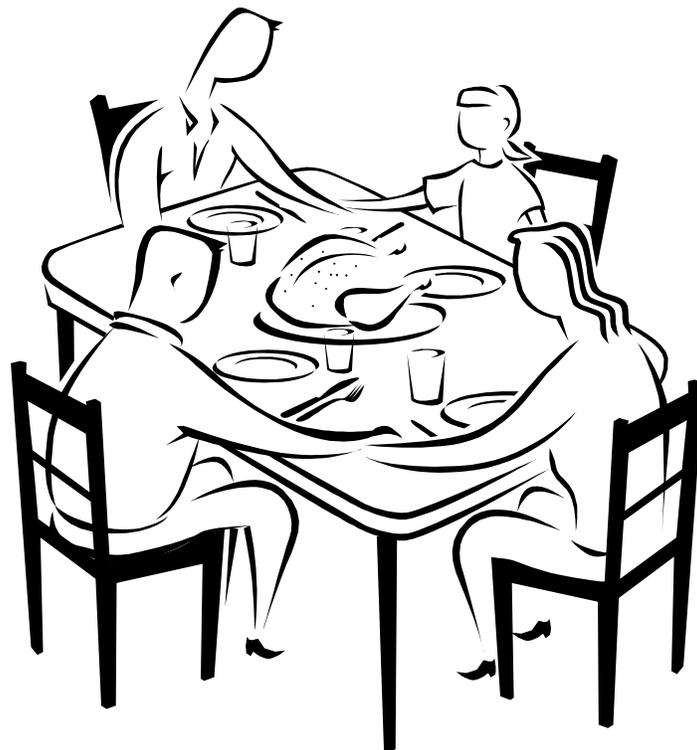
Looking for a New Year's Resolution?

The famous New Year's Resolution . . . The most common promise that we make to ourselves that is seldom kept. Perhaps this is because it almost always involves giving up a habit or behavior that we really are not ready to eliminate from our lives. Granted, they are well intended and meant to improve our health and/or lifestyle. But maybe the "giving up" aspect is what puts a negative spin on them that causes resolutions to have an average lifespan of midnight on New Year's Eve to about noon on New Year's Day?

So . . . Here's an idea. How about making that resolution a positive thing by adding something instead? One suggestion is to revive the habit saying a grace before meals. Actually, many families and individuals do continue to pause for prayer before meals despite the fast pace of contemporary life. However, many of us so often find ourselves running from sun up to sun down without stopping to give it a second thought.

To assist you in reviving (or enhancing, if you already do say grace) this practice, the Vestry has granted approval to Emmanuel to purchase a number of booklets entitled "Table Graces" which will be distributed to the households in the parish. This is a Forward Movement publication, the same publisher of many Episcopal resources including "Forward Day by Day" and the majority of our tracts and devotional booklets which are available in the narthex. Forward Movement's description of the item is as follows: "These booklets are designed to stand on a tabletop or counter, with the same prayer viewed on both sides to encourage praying together at meals." The book contains thirty prayers which can be read together, said quietly, or even sung. Included are simple and often well-known graces such as "Come Lord Jesus" and "God is great" as well as more advanced prayers from the Book of Common Prayer and other sources.

These booklets will be available to you at no cost in the near future so that you may begin this positive New Year's resolution! On that note, it is Emmanuel's wish that you have a blessed 2015!



December 17, 2014

Ember Day

Dear Bishop Prior,

The Shared Ministry Team of Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Minnesota is in its second year of ministry formation. We meet once a month on the second Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. throughout the whole year. We are using the LifeCycles curriculum. We are on Unit 3 of Cycle II.

Academically, we are finding the readings interesting, although there is a feeling we could do more. Members of the team take turns leading a section for the class which helps facilitate deeper diving into the curriculum. We are finding that sometimes the viewpoints in the readings are surprisingly different, encouraging us to think about things in a different way. We seem to be reading more and discussing more.

We are finding that we are bonding as a group as we open up to each as we share our personal journeys. We are appreciating each other's intelligence, opinions and education. Our commitment to ministry since our original discernment has grown. For instance, our liturgist, Wendy Zander, is doing a hospice chaplaincy at Grand Arbor and regularly takes Eucharist to shut-ins. Others on the team have now been trained to be Lay Eucharist Ministers and Chalice Bearers along with a few others in the congregation.

A highlight of our study together is when Mike Sirany and Dan Johnson spent a day with us discussing and demonstrating spiritual direction. The Commission on Ministry has requested that each of our team members be using a spiritual director. Three of us have been in spiritual direction for quite a few months. The other three are now highly motivated to secure one.

Each of us have been in daily discipline of prayer, reading of scripture and journaling with varying degrees of success. The LifeCycles curriculum introduces and explores different methods of prayer such as lectio divina, meditation, and Celtic prayer. This is done as a class and we are encouraged to try this as a daily discipline individually. Eventually, we each hope to find a method that works and speaks to our own hearts.

We hope that this Ember Day letter finds that you are well. We pray for your ministry each Sunday. We send our blessings and prayers for a holy and peaceful Advent and for a joyous Christmas season.

With Hope,

The Rev. Linnae Grabner-Hegg, mentor/companion

The Rev. Tom Sinning, postulant for ordination to priesthood

Belvin Doebbert, preacher

JoEllen Doebbert, Christian Education

Karen Riecks, preacher, administration (and senior warden)

Wendy Zander, liturgist, musician

On December 21, we all decorated the church to get it ready for the Christmas Eve service. The decorations will stay up throughout the 12 days of Christmas.





Lectionary Readings for January

January 4

Second Sunday after Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a
Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23
or Luke 2:41-52
or Matthew 2:1-12
Psalm 84 or 84:1-8

January 11

First Sunday after the Epiphany

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 18

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10(11-20)
Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 25

Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62: 6-14
1 Corinthians 7: 29-31
Mark 1:14-20

Birthdays

Donna Ziegelman
Linnae Hegg
JoEllen Doebbert
John Hull
Mark Reicks
Stephanie Schaper
Christian Schaper
Flynn Bakkum-Byne

Remember in Your Prayers

(please use as a prayer list):

All clergy serving Emmanuel, especially Charles, Linnae and Tom
Jana Preble
Bishop Brian Prior
Edith's daughter Dana
Don Krueger
Pat Weinmann
John & Cleone Sherman
Bill & Josie Heegaard
JoEllen's father Al
Alison Derby
John
Military Personnel
The Total Ministry Team
Peace in the World
The Food Shelf and those who use it Heartland Girls Ranch
Dylan's Glove's of Love
The future of the Episcopal Church
The people of Ziwa and the Rift Valley



A HAPPY
NEW YEAR

Address service requested

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