

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

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www.emmanuelutheraneastmont.org

412-824-4525 (office); 412-401-5742 (Pastor's cell)

Office Hours: Monday 9-1, Wednesday 11-3, Thursday 9-1

May 1, 2024

This is a TWO-WEEK MAILING. There will be no mailing next week.

Pastor Linda, Helen Williams, and Nancy Sipe will be attending Lutheran Day in the Capitol on May 9 in Harrisburg next week. They will give a report when they return.

On Mother's Day, Sunday May 12, we are focusing on the need for good nutrition for mothers and children. Bread for the World, an ecumenical Christian advocacy group, recommends letters to our federal senators and legislators in support of the Farm Bill, which includes many of the programs that people rely on such as WIC, SNAP (formerly food stamps), school and summer lunch programs, and numerous programs for seniors. On Mother's Day, we will provide information about these programs. Then everyone can prepare their letters and bring them to worship on May 19. We will dedicate our letters and send them to Washington DC.

Pentecost is Sunday, May 19

Sunday, May 19, is **PENTECOST**. We celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Church.

To celebrate God's gift of God's spirit, we will:

Wear RED

Feast on cheesecake and red fruits

Welcome a guest musician, Gladis Henriquez, the flautist who was with us on Easter Sunday.

We will also celebrate **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION** for the children in the Bilingual Holy Communion class. Thank you to Susan Smith for interpretation assistance at the class and on May 19.



**Red Geraniums
for Pentecost**

*If you'd like to order geraniums to beautify the church, the signup sheet is on the table in the entry way, or call the church office. The geraniums cost \$5 each; the **last day to order is Sunday, May 12.***

Equal Exchange, Fair Trade and You

Fair trade is a way of paying the farmer or maker fairly. Equal Exchange is a non-profit that pioneered fair trade in the United States. Coffee, tea, chocolate, and other cooperative farmer organizations sell their products to Equal Exchange. There is no middleman or multinational corporations determined to buy low and sell high. **Pastor Linda is placing an order with Equal Exchange. You may request your favorite coffee, tea, chocolate, nuts, dates, and olive oil. Deadline to order is this Sunday, May 5.** You can learn more at www.equalexchange.org



Reading the Gospel of Mark Together

Wednesdays at 10 am in May and June
Together we read and discuss.

“Giving to God” Stewardship Study based on the book by Mark A. Powell. These sessions are held on the first Monday of the month. The next session is scheduled for Monday, May 6. There will be a session in June. There may be a new book and new study in the fall.

Worship and pray in person in the sanctuary OR

By phone: Call 312-626-6799. When prompted, enter the meeting ID 923 3815 0341.

By computer or smartphone: Go to www.zoom.us. Enter Meeting ID 923 3815 0341.

At home without technology: Read the bulletin. Read the Scripture. Pray. Meditate.

Bible Book of the Month: The book for May is **Joshua**. The introduction to Joshua is included with this mailing. You can also find introductions to all the Bible Books of the month on the home page of our website, www.emmanuelutheraneastmont.org.



Mon., May 6, 2 pm – *Giving to God* session at Bob Evans

Thurs., May 9 – Lutheran Day at the Capitol

Sun., May 12 – Mother’s Day including Bread for the World presentation

Sun., May 12 – Last day to order geraniums for Pentecost

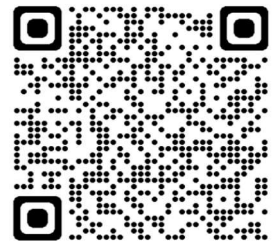
Sun., May 19 – Pentecost

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIVING.

You may give in person, send a contribution in the mail or donate online.

Go to <https://www.emmanuelutheraneastmont.org/> and you’ll see the link.

Or use the QR code for easy connection on your smart phone.



To order **altar flowers** for our weekly worship services, contact Judy Mayhood (412-760-0986), call the church office, or sign up on the Flower Chart in the entry way. The cost is \$50, or \$25 per vase. You can pay for flowers online or by check.

PRAYER REQUESTS: Call Pastor Theophilus for yourself or others to be included in prayer. Contact Marsha Kennedy also; she sends cards to let people know that we are praying for them. You can reach Marsha at 412-824-4966 **or** Marsha_Kennedy@verizon.net **or** 415 Kingston Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.



News from our Outdoor Ministries

Workday at Camp Agape is this Saturday, May 4, 2024

Contact Pastor Dennis at 412-804-1673 for more information.



Lutherlyn invites everyone to experience camp activities and attend the Rededication of the Amphitheater at **Camp Blast on Saturday, May 11.**



Emmanuel's Welcoming Immigrants Housing Project

WIHP has received a \$1,000 grant from the Westmoreland Foundation. Thank you to the anonymous donor!

We welcomed two social work students for practicum hours. Thank you, Madison and Etta, for your assistance.

We are collecting these items to help an asylee in their new housing:

Single bed, bedding, towels

TV, Rice cooker, Microwave

Kitchen towels, dishwashing supplies, dish drainer, dish soap, hot pads, serving and cooking utensils

Cleaning supplies, including broom and dustpan, scrubbies, bleach, vinegar, Murphy's Oil Soap

SWPA SYNOD ASSEMBLY

FRIDAY, JUNE 14: 9:30 AM - SATURDAY, JUNE 15: 12:30 PM

In Person at PennWest California (Formerly Cal-U), 250 University Ave, California, PA 15419

Emmanuel may send two lay Voting members and an unlimited number of non-voting participants to the assembly of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Helen Williams was appointed by council to attend.

We can send one more voting member. Please speak up if you are intrigued.

The synod assembly is the highest legislative authority of our synod; they will be making decisions that impact 143 congregations covering 10 counties in southwest PA.

A Stewardship Reflection by Pastor Dennis Orsen

The word "tithe" means a tenth-part, 1/10 or 10%. One of the pastors in our synod visited India. He witnessed poor farmers, during the harvest season, place one scoop of grain in a container for the church, and nine scoops in a container to go to market. Marty E. Stevens shared her scholarly research in *"Temples, Tithes, and Taxes."* She concluded that the Israelites adopted the concept from the Canaanite government.

"Tithing" is a concept I learned early in life. I learned it in sermons our pastors preached to challenge the parishioners to give 10% of our income to the church. Erroneously, I concluded from what I heard that tithing is what we give to God and the remaining 90% is ours; I wrongly thought that what we give to the church is what we give to God. Later in life, I heard Clarence Jordan, a Southern Baptist preacher, say "God does not ask for 10%, God asks for it all." Wow, if giving to the church is the same as giving to God, then what do we have to live on?

One of the most important points Mark Allan Powell makes in his book *"Giving to God"* is that giving to God and giving to the church are not one and the same. We are to give 100% to God, beginning with the giving of ourselves. As we say in a well-known offering prayer:

Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – our selves, our time, and our possessions – signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (Lutheran Book of Worship)

Once we have given 100% to God, God becomes the manager of our life, our time, and our possessions. Yes, we received the status of a steward in our baptism, but God remains the ultimate steward.

JOSHUA

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous; for you shall put this people in possession of the land that I swore to their ancestors to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to act in accordance with all the law that my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or the left. Joshua 1:5b-7

The book of Joshua begins just after Moses' death. The Israelites had lived a nomadic life mostly in the region south of the modern country of Israel. Forty years earlier they were escaping slaves who received God's law and covenant and began journeying to Canaan. God promised they could move in and take over the land, but then they were too frightened. Only two Israelite spies said it could be done despite giants in the land: Caleb and Joshua.

Forty years later, they are poised on the east side of the Jordan River. Will Joshua be able to lead as well as Moses? Will God's promise that this land will become theirs be fulfilled? How? Will they adjust to this new life?

IMPORTANT NOTE: This book is not written in the Hebrew language of Joshua's time, over 1,200 years before Christ. It is written in the Hebrew of 600-400 years before Jesus. The northern kingdom of Israel had been taken over by the Assyrians. This is written when the southern country of Judah is under threat or already conquered by the Babylonians. This telling of moving into the promised land is idealistic, and even ruthless, in presenting obedient faithfulness. Think about how this is a sermon for another era when God's people have failed to put God first and now realize they need to recommit.

Obedience and Victory – Joshua 1-6

In words and deeds, God shows that He is with them. The Jordan River separates, like the Red Sea. Watch the attention to remembering God's actions and fulfilled promises. Note their priorities: before conquest, the men are circumcised, and the first Passover is held. Manna ceases. These chapters contain the well-known stories of Rahab and the city walls of Jericho falling down.

Warfare and Conquest – Joshua 7-11

You can read these chapters for the victorious conquest and effective military strategy, but there is more here. Who really wins the battles? Why does God command them to destroy everything? What does it take to remain pure and obedient? Notice, too, the indications that gaining dominance over the land was not simply destroying cities and killing the inhabitants. Rahab and her family and the Gileadites who cleverly gain protection are consistent with archaeological evidence that many local inhabitants were absorbed into Israelite tribes or lived side by side. The next book of the Bible, Judges

tells us stories of peaceful and oppressive co-existence, of disobedience and trust.

Distribution of Land – Joshua 13-21

These chapters detail the distribution of land to the tribes. There are some interesting stories and explanations in between descriptions of boundaries. The cities of sanctuary in chapter 20 show God's mercy and justice. It helps to read with a map. If you have maps in your Bible, you probably have at least one from the earlier time of Abraham and/or the later kingdoms of Saul and David. Additional maps will be available at church. If this section is boring or overwhelming, focus on getting a general sense of the land distribution. Who set boundaries? Why?

Now What? – Joshua 22-24

The concluding chapters name threats to future unity and faithfulness. The land is at rest. Wandering is over. Joshua's last task is to challenge them. ***“Choose this day whom you will serve! As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”*** He warns them that it will not be easy, that they must put away the foreign gods among them, but they remember what God has done for them. ***The Lord our God we will serve and Him we will obey.***

