



Published monthly by
EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
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Pastoral Ponderings

Don't you hate it when someone asks for your thoughts on something important and then you never hear what they did with that input? Last spring, I asked all of us to think about our future as a congregation, most specifically about who God is calling us to be and to serve in the next 7-9 years. We had three different conversations in April, May and June trying to discern our best sense of the answers to those questions. About thirty of us were involved in those conversations. We worked hard to listen to each other and to the Holy Spirit.

From all that sharing, this is the vision that emerged:

Our worship undergirds and empowers all the missions that Emmanuelites do together and as individuals. Our worship is participatory and authentic to who we are. It is deeply personal and importantly corporate. It is an important way we practice hospitality.

There are diverse, growing disciples of all ages. People of every age group enthusiastically participate in spiritual and faith formation opportunities designed for them. There are several baptisms every year and other opportunities for people to share their faith. Families attend worship and service events together. Children and adults learn from each other how to live in peace and serve Christ.

People will say of us, "What a peculiar bunch those Christians are." Our neighbors will be blessed by our very existence, as we model what it is like to walk the way of Christ. We enjoy simply being together and we welcome others into healthy, mutually supportive relationships that help us grow as disciples.

Your input mattered and is already being acted upon. This is an exciting and challenging vision. In some important ways, it already describes us. In other areas, it helps us set priorities for the way we focus our time and energy and finances in the near future.

Continued next page...

Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find information about a new Sunday morning format. That is an outgrowth of our desire to provide spiritual and faith formation opportunities for every age group. And look for the announcement about the long- desired digital projection system which is becoming a reality. That will help us fulfill our vision about engaging, participatory, hospitable worship.

I am energized by the focus this shared vision provides. The Spirit is lively among us this season! May we let ourselves be borne along with joy and gratitude.

Blessings,
Kathy

After experimenting with her Sabbath rhythm last spring, Pastor Kathy has settled into a pattern. She will work from the church on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Thursday is devoted to sermon and worship preparation from home. Friday is her Sabbath, i.e. her day off. Please make every effort to contact her Sunday through Thursday and honor her Sabbath day. Emergencies are, of course, the exception.



Blessing of the Backpacks

We will launch our program year with intergenerational worship on September 8, starting at 10:00. There will be age-appropriate worship elements for all ages from Kindergarten and up. Only the preschool class will meet this Sunday. All of the children's classes will be in session on September 15.

Our focus for this worship will be "Who is a Disciple?" Hint: Disciples are learners. We are launching our program year just as the academic year is getting underway. **Students of every age, from preschool to graduate school, are invited to bring a backpack, a lunchbox, or some other object you take to school with you.** During worship, we will recognize all of our students and teachers and parents and others involved in school with a Blessing of the Backpacks.

FOCUS Worship:
September 1
First Presbyterian (362 State St.)
Service at 9:30 a.m.

ABC/NYS Mission Conference

October 4-5

Delta Lake Bible Conference Ctr., Rome, NY

Cost: \$85/person

Includes lodging, 3 meals, program and Mission opportunities

Registration deadline: September 10

Special Guests: Dan & Sarah Chetti, Beirut, Lebanon

Anita Gutierrez, Durban, South Africa

New Christian Education Format to Begin

Something new is about to happen . . . on Sunday mornings and at other times. This new thing is in keeping with our history of placing a high value on quality Christian education and our desire to provide spiritual formation opportunities for all ages. Beginning in September, Sunday mornings will include a new structure for worship and education. Worship will begin at 10:00 and may last until 11:15 on occasion. The children will be dismissed from worship after the Affirmation of Children and Youth to go upstairs to one of three age-appropriate activities which will last until 11:30. Our goal is to provide more educational time than previously occurred during worship and to have a larger group of children learning together than was happening in previous years.

The age groupings are Preschool (ages 3-5), Godly Play (Kindergarten through grade 3) and Juniors (grades 4-7) Older youth are invited to receive training to be teachers in Godly Play. Training is required for any youth or adult wishing to serve in our children's educational programs, including the nursery. On the third Sunday of each month, members of the Junior Class will remain in worship.


Adult educational opportunities will also shift. The Family Matters class will continue to meet one Sunday per month following worship with child-care provided. The Contemporary Christian Concerns class will meet three Sundays per month following worship with child-care only provided on the Family Matters Sunday. There will be no adult educational opportunity on the Sunday of Diaconate meetings. The Adult Bible study is seeking a weekday meeting time which will be announced shortly. There are also plans in the works for additional spiritual formation and small group meetings outside of Sunday mornings. Topics currently under consideration include "Unplug the Christmas Machine", personal money management as a spiritual issue, and theology at the movies. Stay tuned for more on those topics or share your own ideas with a member of Christian Growth and Development.

This new format is an experiment. We will structure our life together this way through December. Please be patient with the bumps that will inevitably occur. Please offer your constructive criticism to Pastor Kathy or a member of Christian Growth and Development. (Robin Bray, Beth Malone, Audrey Ford or Jim Wilkerson)

Lunch and Special Program Planned

On September 8 you are invited to remain after worship and enjoy a meal together. We will be serving pork tenderloin, gravy, potatoes, vegetable and dessert. There will be a free will offering to support scholarships for the retreat. There will also be a short program to introduce the Sunday School teachers and another surprise you won't want to miss. We hope to see you there! (MM)

In Celebration and Appreciation



In celebration of Ken Graham's 90th birthday this month, his family gave a gift to Emmanuel. It recognizes his life-long faith and the value that he places on this community which nurtured and sustained that faith for many years. This gift enables us to purchase and install a digital projector which will enhance our worship. We believe it will enable us especially to engage contemporary people who are increasingly fluent in the use of symbol and metaphor as ways to communicate and understand the world. We look forward to creating new elements of worship and enhancing some existing ones.

Thank you to the adult Graham children, who grew up in this congregation, for honoring Ken's legacy of faith in a way that reaches to the next generation.

Resources Available

This summer's Mission Summit (formerly known as the ABC Biennial Meeting) was, by many accounts, one of the best in recent history. I brought back some videos and audio recordings which are available to anyone who would like to borrow them. The videos include Friday night's session with Michelle Alexander as the keynote speaker, a Native American prayer ceremony with an eagle feather and burning cedar, plus a short report on ABC prison ministries and a liturgical dance to "Break Every Chain". Saturday was the Burmese celebration with Karen and Chinn choirs, a sermon by John Upton from Baptist World Alliance and a sermon/lecture from the president of the Myanmar Baptist Convention. I also have audio CDs from the International Ministries luncheon. The speaker was a missiologist from Biola University, Dr. Allen Yeh.

For the history and mission lovers among us, I can offer a wonderful biography of the Judsons, *Bless God and Take Courage* by Rosalie Hall Hunt. It is well-written with compelling stories and details of their struggles and triumphs in Burma/Myanmar of the 1800's. It's a story of faith and courage and determination, but also of authentic struggle and sorrow. It provided a new window of understanding into the very high esteem in which modern-day Karen people hold the Judsons. I highly recommend it. Please let me know if you wish to borrow any of these resources. (KD)

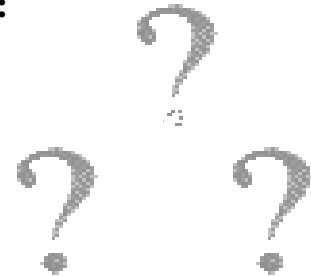
We are in need of 2 random items:

1. Cloth handkerchiefs - any color or size. They will be returned in September, but you should put your name on yours with masking tape.
2. Empty flour bags or boxes - from any kind of flour, any size.

They will not be returned, unless you really want it back!

There is a box in Fellowship Hall to collect these items.

Thank you!!



In preparation for the new school year, Christian Growth is restocking the First Aid Kits that are in the children's classrooms. Needed are a small packages of band-aids, packages of gauze and a small package of disposal non-latex gloves for each of the four classrooms. Thank you. ~ Robin Bray

Save the Date...
September 10

**Annual FOCUS Golf Outing
at Orchard Creek Golf Course
to benefit**

FOCUS Interfaith Food Pantry & Soup Kitchen

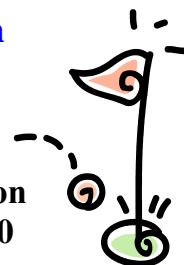
Cost for Golfers: \$120 for on/\$440 for foursome

Fee includes greens fees, cart, prizes & food

Registration deadline is September 3

Don't Golf? Join us for a buffet lunch. \$20 per person

For further information or registration call 433-0460



**Remember the
Food Pantry**

September: toilet paper

Retreat Coming Soon...



Join the Emmanuel congregation for an overnight retreat at Pathfinder Lodge September 13-14. We will be seeking the leading of the Spirit under the direction of David Reed-Brown, pastor for twenty years and currently serving as Director of Christian Education at North Church in Hartford, Conn. Besides pastoral talents, David is a skilled professional magician who appeals to young and old alike.

The retreat starts Friday night, September 13th with dinner, and ends after dinner on Saturday the 14th. Registration fee for adults is \$70, children (ages 6-12) \$30, children 5 and under are free! Scholarships are available, so don't let money get in the way!

Besides cozy cabins with full bathrooms, there are spaces for campers and tents if you really want to rough it. The space is handicap accessible. Look for EBCoupons in the Sunday bulletins. The sooner you make reservations the lower the price. This is a wonderful fun fellowship event providing us all time to reflect on God's presence in our lives and the life of our church. For more information contact Marilyn, Gretchen, Amy or Mark. Sign up now. Your presence is important.



**Protestant Campus Ministry
Patron's Dinner
Thursday, September 26, 2013**
First Lutheran Church
(181 Western Avenue, Albany NY)

6:00 p.m. Silent Auction
7:00 p.m. Dinner and Program
Featuring: Bishop Marie Jerge
Upstate New York Synod, ELCA



Mark Your Calendar! Save the Date!

Join your church family for an afternoon of apple picking! We will gather after worship on Sunday, September 29th (weather permitting) and carpool to a local orchard (site yet to be determined). Please plan to bring a brown bag lunch so we can eat together prior to leaving for the orchard. Invite friends, family, neighbors, and we will share a fun time in the beautiful outdoors enjoying God's kingdom.

Watch for a sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall the weeks before the event. This will be a free event to attend, only pay for what you plan to take home with you. Questions or need transportation? Call Barb Lahut, 766-9333

To Emmanuel Baptist Church:

Our Karen Baptist Church in Albany are very thankful to all of you for giving us the opportunity to cooperate with you in God's ministry. We believe that God is answering our prayers and grants us this privilege through you. In our cooperating, we may need your advice and suggestions and feel free to tell us and correct us. As we promise, we will help you with church cleaning, safety and care. May God bless you all in serving Him.

In his Highest Glory,
Pastor Mu Say Wah
On behalf of all Karen Baptist Church



We are expecting the scaffolding for our exterior masonry restorations and roof/tower repairs to be in place soon.

(perhaps by the time you read this)

Although we can't fully predict the ramifications, parking and access to the office entrance will certainly be restricted. The precise time line on the work is also unknown. We apologize for the inconvenience you will incur during these urgent, essential repairs to the church.

Men's Gathering Scheduled

Emmanuel men are invited to meet for lunch at the Normanside Restaurant at 11:45 on Wednesday, Sept. 4. (150 Salisbury Rd. Delmar) If you plan to attend, please contact Bob Hunziker or Roy Mallory so adequate seating can be arranged. Hope to see you there!

Mark Your Calendar...

Sept. 1 ~ FOCUS Worship at First Pres.
2 ~ *Church Office Closed*
17 ~ Coordinating Council
18 ~ *Deadline for the October Mosaic*
22 ~ Diaconate

Office Hours:

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(beginning Sept. 5)

Church Office Closed: September 2



Dear Friends:

Thank you for your many expressions of concern and support during these past months. The cards, calls and especially your prayers have helped sustain Stacy and me through this difficult time, and we are most grateful.

Stacy is recuperating very well since his August 1st surgery, and I am feeling more like "my old self" by the day. We are truly blessed. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Dorothy and Stacy Wilburn

Happy Birthday...

Ruth Pushee
Dorothy Wilburn
Ariana Paul
Veronica Smith
Ken Graham
Gillian Horan
Pickett Tait Simpson
Madison Stroebel
Nathan LaBarge
Julianna Palm
Pat Hunziker
Frank Scheu
Marion Dickinson
Mark Chaffin



1st
4th
5th
8th
14th
14th
16th
17th
17th
21st
26th
27th
29th
29th

If your birthday is not published in our monthly listing, please notify Dorothy at 465-5161.

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