

THE MOSAIC

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EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Pastoral Ponderings



After more than a month of being confined to quarters during this pandemic, I am taking stock of what I have learned. My observations are leading me to conclusions like these:

- ❖ Some people will take a bad situation and make it worse, like those who refuse to practice social distancing, those who escalate racial tensions, those with political power who continue to dismantle agencies and systems established to protect the common welfare.
- ❖ Some people will take a bad situation and make it better, like those who sew home-made masks by the dozens and the hundreds for friends and strangers, volunteers in food pantries and soup kitchens who continue to see that the hungry are fed, those who deliver groceries and other essentials to the households of the elderly and immunocompromised, musicians who offer living room concerts and balcony sing-alongs, and essential workers across a range of industries who keep showing up to do their jobs.
- ❖ Emmanuel people are well represented in the second category. Many of you are still working and others are expressing care in a variety of ways. Thank you!
- ❖ Churches are idiosyncratic – whoever we were before pandemic, we still are, even more so. A church's online worship style is determined by congregational personality and the available level of technological expertise. Emmanuel is informal and mildly chaotic when we meet within our building; we are even more so via Zoom.
- ❖ We are blessed with our own Geek Squad (Kathy, Judy and Curtis) who take our technical proficiency to a high level. Tony and Marilyn have taken on the challenge of creating Godly Play and Little Man videos for living room worship and your adaptive staff (Michael and me) are flexing and learning as fast as we can.
- ❖ I am more willing than usual to pat myself on the back during lock-down.
- ❖ Members and friends of Emmanuel are also flexing and learning. You have figured out how to engage the Zoom technology and are hanging in there despite technical difficulties and operator error (almost always mine).

This time has deprived us of many things and enhanced others. I would enjoy hearing what you have observed or learned or been reminded of. I'm looking forward to the time when we can converse in person, but until then, please feel free to call or e-mail me any time.

Peace,
Kathy





ZOOM is the internet software we are using to gather for worship and Bible study and other church meetings. It is a new tool for most of us. It is not the same as being present with each other in person, but it does enable us to stay connected right now. If you have not yet attempted to join us via Zoom, I encourage you to do so. You have been missed.

Many of us have mastered the intricacies of connecting with a computer or a tablet or a phone. Now it is time to refine our skill in terms of Zoom etiquette. Following these suggestions will contribute to the best experience for everyone.

- A. Please keep your microphone muted except when you are speaking to the group. Almost all sounds from each location can be heard in other locations. Sounds that can be heard include side comments, conversations with others in your household, pencil tapping, moving your device, cuckoo clocks, water running . . . etc.
- B. Most of the time, the host(s) will mute your device. The exceptions to this are during the gathering time and the sharing of concerns. When the host unmutes you, please mute yourself unless you are sharing.
- C. Consider sharing concerns via the chat function.
- D. Position your device so that it is stationary and your face is on the screen. You are welcome to attend worship in your pajamas. You are welcome to get dressed as you normally would for church. We chose Zoom so that we could see each other's faces. Try to avoid positioning the device so that all we get is a view of the ceiling.
- E. Many of you demonstrate active engagement by nodding or smiling or clapping (with your mute on) or a thumbs-up. These signs are encouraging to everyone participating. Keep them up!

Zoom Mini-Tutorial



The menu bar is at the bottom of a computer screen. A slightly different version appears on a tablet screen or cell phone. With the Zoom menu bar, you are able to do the following

- 1 Mute/unmute your audio (not the audio of the participants). You can also select your audio input here by clicking the up arrow next to the microphone icon.
- 2 Start/stop your video. (You can block video if you are in your pj's and don't want to be seen.) You can also select your video input here by clicking the up arrow next to the video camera icon.
- 4 View a list of participants
- 6 Send a message to one person (using private chat) or to all participants. Note: Private chats are visible to the hosts.
- 8 Leave the meeting

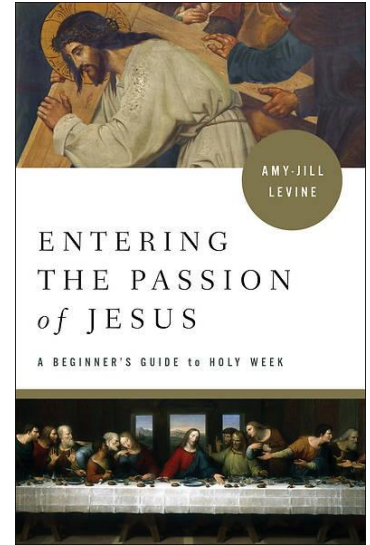
Note 3, 5, 7 are functions restricted to hosts only



In another 2020 innovation, palms were delivered to people’s homes in time for Palm Sunday Living Room worship. Thank you to our volunteers who made those special deliveries: Lianne DeMieri, Sheila Healy, Liselle LaFrance, Becca Leet, David Malone, Gretchen Scheu, and Jim Wilkerson.

Now that we have become somewhat proficient in gathering together online for worship and Bible study, we’re trying Zoom Sunday School. We’ve picked up the study of Holy Week that we had started in Lent. Jim Wilkerson is leading conversation based on Amy-Jill Levine’s book with a short video summary of the key points of each chapter. To participate, simply stick around in the Zoom space after worship on Sundays. There will be about a 15-minute break between the end of worship and the start of Sunday School. Dr. Levine’s material is organized around the idea that Jesus’ final days were full of risk. We will use the following schedule:

- May 3 ~ The First Dinner: Risking Rejection
- May 10 ~ The Last Supper: Risking the Loss of Friends
- May 17 ~ Gethsemane: Risking Temptation



Eastertide during a time of sheltering-in-place may lead us to focus even more carefully than usual on what really matters. The first chapters of Acts offers a perspective on the heart of the matter for the first Christians – spending time together, the simplicity of daily bread, gratitude and generosity. These are some of the topics we will consider in our living room church experiences this month.

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|---------------------|---|
| May 3 | Straight from the Heart
Luke 24:13-35
Breakfast (see below) |
| May 10 | No Trouble in my Heart
Psalm 31
Acts 7:55-60 |
| May 17 | Open the Eyes of My Heart
Ephesians 1:15-23
Luke 24:44-53 |
| May 24 | TBD |
| May 31
Pentecost | Psalm 104:24-33
John 20:19-23 |

Day by day,
as they spent much time
together in the temple,
they broke bread at home
and ate their food with
glad and generous hearts,
praising God and having
the goodwill of all the
people.
Acts 2:46-47a

On May 3, please bring your breakfast to church. The text for the day is from Luke 24, when the disciples recognized Jesus in the breaking of bread. It seems appropriate to share a virtual meal together as we reflect on that scripture. If you need to eat earlier than 10:00, then just bring your tea or coffee to our Zoom space.

Pastor Kathy would **love** to share worship leadership. If you would like to read scripture or lead another element, please let her know. She would also be grateful to hear any thoughts you care to offer about worship. What are you finding most meaningful in this time? What is less effective? With microphones muted most of the time and limited ability to read facial expressions across cyberspace, your honest feedback would be most appreciated.

From the Financial Secretary...

Giving to Emmanuel

The congregation that is Emmanuel Baptist Church is so very faithful – in caring, in praying, and in giving. Even during this strange time when we cannot meet together, you have continued to give faithfully. (see the Treasurer’s report and graph.)

I wanted to thank you and to remind you, if you haven’t heard, that there are still some options for giving, even absent the passing of the offering plate in worship.

1. You can always mail a check or money order to Emmanuel at:

Emmanuel Baptist Church
275 State Street
Albany, NY 12210



2. You can give securely on-line now. We’ve talked about this for years now, and finally got it set up. Nothing like a pandemic to push you to move into the not-quite-so-comfortable zone!

- a. Go to www.emmanuelalbany.org
- b. Choose Giving from the top menu
- c. Click the Give to EBC button
- d. Choose:
 - i. How much you want to give
 - ii. Whether you want your gift to go towards the Offering, Building Fund, a Special Offering, or the Fellowship Fund (see item in this newsletter on the Fellowship Fund)
 - iii. Enter if you would like your gift to be recurring
 - iv. Then you enter your name and banking or card information.
 - v. You can also choose to “cover” the banking site fee.

Each time you give on-line, there is a banking site fee charged to the church that is a percentage of your gift. (For credit cards, it is about 3%. For debit cards and bank accounts, it is about 1% If you cover that fee, it will raise the deduction from your bank account/credit card by that percentage. (For instance, if your gift is \$100 and you choose to cover the fee, then \$103 or so would be charged to your bank account.)



It is that easy!!!

Fellowship Fund – Giving and Receiving

Giving: Is your Pandemic Stimulus check burning a hole in your pocket? Do you feel that maybe there are folks who need that \$1200 +/- much more desperately than you do? Or do you just wish that you could help out Emmanuelites and other folks who need help financially during this quarantining time, or just plain everyday hard times? We have an opportunity for you!

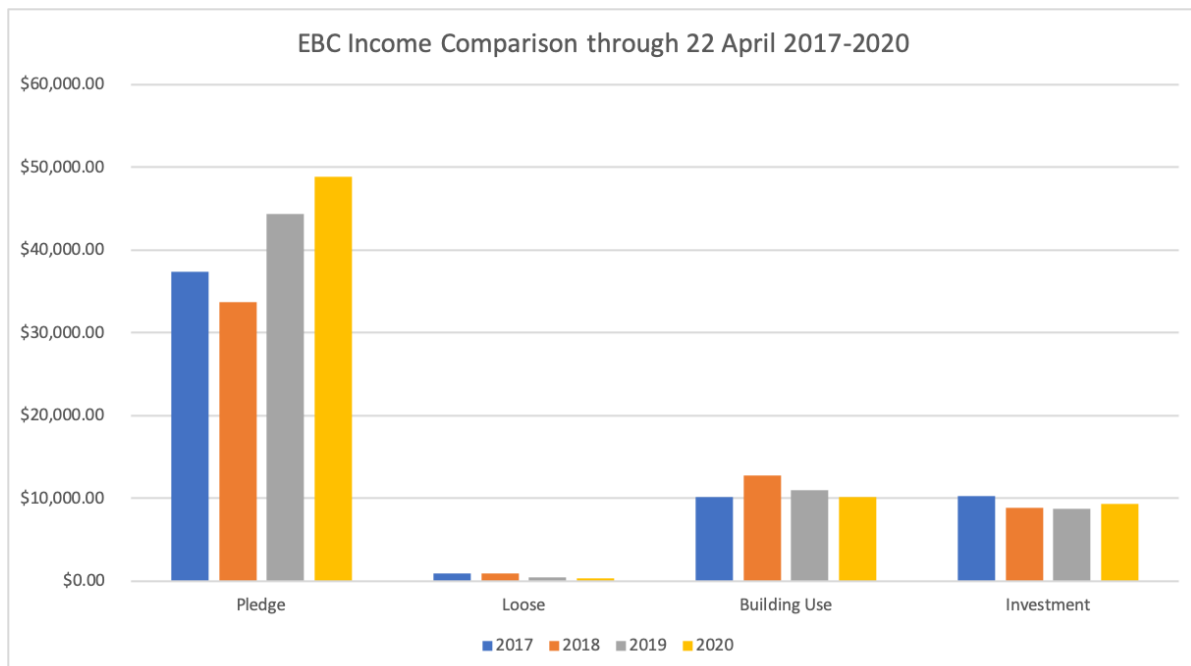
Long known as the Communion Fund, because it used to be collected on Communion Sundays in special envelopes, the Fellowship Fund is a special bank account from which the church is able to provide for needs of members and friends. It might be as simple as a gift of cell phone minutes or groceries, maybe covering rent or a car repair, or providing travel money to visit an ill parent or child.

How do you give to the Fellowship Fund? Simply note Fellowship Fund in the memo line of your check, or wrap it in a note that says Fellowship Fund. Or, use the on-line giving tool on the www.emmanuelalbany.org website and choose Fellowship Fund (see the Giving to Emmanuel item in this newsletter).

Receiving: Maybe you read the above on Giving to the Fellowship Fund and you have tears in your eyes because you wish you could give. But instead, the needs piling up at your feet. We are here for you! Your church family cares and wants to help. Please contact Pastor Kathy, who will work with you to address your needs. (Ruth Pushee)

From the Treasurer...

The good news for Emmanuel's Current Expense so far this year is that income has been good. Now that we have online giving as an option (see the article from the Financial Secretary), people have really stepped up to help out with the Current Expense budget. The chart below compares this year's income to the previous three years' income, from January through April 23, in 4 categories (pledge, loose offering, building use and investments). Loose offering is, of course, quite a bit lower this year, because we have not been meeting in person. Nonetheless, at least as of April 23, our income is comparable, or even a little better, than for the same period in the last three years. This is important because we are continuing to pay our employees during this difficult period. (Kathleen Moore)



CROP Hunger Walk



The Albany CROP Hunger Walk is scheduled for Sunday, May 3. This year, due to the pandemic, it is a virtual event walk together apart. In other words, there will be no physical gathering at the usual starting place. Walkers walk alone or with their families or a small social distancing group (5 or less) in their neighborhoods the afternoon of May 3rd or whenever it is convenient for them, in solidarity with the people who depend on the hunger-fighting programs supported by our CROP Walk funds. The need is especially great this year. 25% of funds raised are used for local hunger programs, 75% for Church World Service programs throughout the world.

Please let me know if you plan to walk. You are encouraged to register for the walk online, and I will also provide you with an envelope for other donations. So far our Emmanuel team is Jean Burton, Kathy Moore, Judy Henningson, Edith Leet, Marilyn Malone, Tony Malone and Nancy Horan.

If you want to support a walker or the Emmanuel team, online donations can be made at the CROP Walk website. It's a great way to raise funds, especially this year. Checks are also accepted, made out to CWS/CROP. We have until June 15th to collect donations.



To donate or to register to walk, here is the link:

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/albanyny/Team/View/130525/Emmanuel-BaptistAlbany>

If you have any questions, email or call me (518) 605-5763. -- Nancy Horan



We rejoice with:

Maria Townes and Rodney Covington who celebrated their first wedding anniversary on Easter Sunday, April 12.

Rachel Scott who completes her

bachelor's degree in Social Work at UAlbany this month. She will begin graduate work in UAlbany School of Social Welfare in the fall.



Betty Mallory and I would like to thank our Emmanuel family for the beautiful Easter lilies that Gretchen Scheu

delivered to us at The Beverwyck. They added much love to our Easter Sunday.

-- Pat Campbell

Happy Birthday...

Laeh Paw	5 th
Sydney Klope	10 th
Beth Malone	11 th
Neeqa Din	15 th
Lianne DeMieri	17 th
Amy Garner	18 th
Skylar Asala	19 th
Ericka Silverman	21 st
Noah Silverman	22 nd
David Malone	23 rd



We are concerned for:

Becky Syltebo who has discontinued chemotherapy and entered hospice care.

The Collins family in the death of Tracy Collins, Senior, from cancer on April 19

Michelle Williams whose mother died of COVID-19 in New York City on April 21

Remember the Food Pantry... *toothpaste*

Deadline for the June **MOSAIC** is May 18.



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