

Good News

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Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Emanuel's mission is to witness
to the good news of salvation through Christ to individuals, the community
and the world through discipleship and service.

MY FAITH JOURNEY

Roots. Something everyone has. I like to think that I had some pretty good ones. Roots are what help to make me what I am today and will be tomorrow. Roots help to suggest or direct the route that I would take in my life here on this earth and in the next life.

I have never had a problem with talking about Jesus and what he means to me. Just not done it that much. Should have done it more. Growing up in Salem, Ohio, was a lot like being around Napoleon. My home church was even called Emmanuel. Yes, had two M's instead of one. Similar size to our church here. I have only been a member of those two churches in my life. Never thought about **not** being a Lutheran. Guess I had some pretty strong roots.

God was ever present in my life as a kid. There were too many ways that God showed his power and wisdom to ever think there wasn't a God, then or now. Dad and I spent a lot of time together which gave us the time to talk. Sure cherish those times, now, as Dad passed from

this life just a year ago December 29th to join his heavenly family. Dad was a dairy farmer all his life. I helped milk the cows and do the chores most every night from being 10 years old until I went to college. We would talk about God and church, but what I remember most is how Dad lived his life. Like when we'd be 'helping' a calf to be born, Dad would remark how amazed every life is whether it is human or animal. Being there watching a calf born and in a few minutes to stand and take milk for the first time is a wonder of God that I grew up being able to appreciate. Being there for those times that a beautiful calf was born only to not take that first breath for some reason, was also beyond what I could understand, but was just another wonder of God.

I remember a particular time when I questioned Dad on why we were helping the neighbors bale their hay, when we had our own hay that was about to be

rained on. I remember how Dad would plow the neighbors drives and the road when it snowed heavy, never taking or expecting anything in return. I would help deliver the sweet corn to the neighbors as well, and we would always be the ones to deliver the food (sometimes took a bigger truck than we had and would go over into Pa. to deliver.) that was gathered to the church each fall for our 'Harvest Home'! It was Dad and Mom that for more years than I can count, supplied the Christmas tree for the church and were the ones to set it up and take it out after the celebration.

To plant a field of corn or wheat and to watch it grow is another wonder that I grew up to appreciate. Can't say that is why I chose to take up Agriculture in college, but that would make the article read better! Remember the roots. You can't always see them, but they are there to hold you from falling over and to give nourishment. Not a bad idea. Wonder who thought of THAT?

It is right that we do not understand all that happens or is going to happen in life. It is good that we have the ability to wonder why? I think that is God's way of testing us. God wants us to make our own decisions in life. He gives us that ability. I have always believed that God does have a sense of humor as he would have to with some of the decisions I have made in my life!

Back a few years ago, just before going into my senior year of high school, I did take the opportunity to go to the seminary for a week-long class. I had grown up through my junior high and high school years having become good family friends with young college students that were in the preacher-in-training program. The INTERNS that came to Emmanuel those years came to find out that they could visit our farm and become just one of the family. Dad would 'squirt' them with milk just the same as anyone else unsuspecting that happened to be in the right place at the right time! Even the cows would treat them the same if they were in the wrong place at the wrong time when they swished their tail that had be laying in the gutter...! I became

especially close with a couple of the intern families. One of which had talked me into or suggested that I attend this program at Capital University. I went with an opened mind that if God so wanted little 'ol me to take the path of a Pastor, he would let me know. Enjoyed the week, but did not hear him calling. More thought, I think I heard him laughing. Took Agriculture. Good Roots, remember? It was about this same time in my life that Phyllis and I started dating. We had gone through school together, even Kindergarten, together. Maybe that was the best direction God gave me at that time in my life! What a Blessing she has been for me and my family!

How could or how can anyone survive the loss of a child? We all know friends, family, or neighbors that have gone though that experience. I cannot imagine the pain and suffering that this would cause. Yet, is that not what God set himself up for? Did he not send his son Jesus Christ to live on this earth and then to die, only to save us from everlasting damnation? HE truly must know pain and suffering. For us to know that everlasting life and salvation is there just for the asking? "Now that's what I'm talking about!" is one common phrase that fits here!

I grew up knowing I was going to Sunday School. Always had a ride into town. My next door neighbors were my God Parents. They had kids just a year or so younger than I. The neighbors on the other side of the farm also went to our Sunday School, so it was just common that we (I have an older sister, brother, and two younger sisters) went. Dad and Mom would usually make it to church after dad got done with the chores. (Seemed like the cows wanted milked even on Sunday mornings. Dad would say that the Preacher wasn't the ONLY

one that had to work Sundays!) Ila Jean , the church organist as I was growing up, was the organist for our wedding, and is still the organist. The SS Superintendent when I was growing up is still the ...no...but is still involved and attends every Sunday. Good Roots. Some would say I am still growing up! I can only **hope** so!

In the end, when my life is over here on earth, it comes down to honesty and integrity. No one will remember how much time I spent working my job or messing around on the computer. It comes down to trying to set an example for my kids and someday, grand kids to live by. It comes down to wanting to be proud of the life I provided my loving wife, who sets the bar high in everything she does. She truly has given me so much to be thankful for. My kids, I miss them very much as they have gone off in their own directions to start their life journey on their own. We do cherish the time that we get to spend together. Thank God that there **are** cell phones and email as we use those a lot to share our daily lives with those we love and who are not close by!

So as I mentioned, I have so very much to be thankful for. This time in my life weighs heavy on my heart. My eyes seem to leak a little more than they used to...I think it is because of **the love that we share** and for knowing how great it must be in that next life that God has prepared for us to share as well. I can only imagine! Until that time, I appreciate all that there is to experience in the future, good and bad, and for the roots that I have been given to help me withstand the rough times ahead. Thank you, Lord for sending your Son to be the **root** of our salvation!

Steve Kloos

*Epiphany – the Light of Christ shining into the World
Companionship Sunday*

January 6, 2008

On this day of Epiphany, every congregation in the Northwestern Ohio Synod is asked to light a candle and to pray for our brothers and sisters in Dodoma Diocese of Tanzania and the Slovak Lutheran Church in Serbia. We are also encouraged to receive an offering *for* the ministry and support of the Tanzania missions.

In 1985, Bishop James Rave signed the initial covenant with the Dodoma Diocese of Tanzania to enter a relationship, promising to:

1. Pray regularly for one another.
2. Encourage specific congregations to become involved as Companion Church Congregations with a particular district in the Dodoma Diocese.
3. Enter into a planned process of visitation, learning from one another and strengthening one another in faith and witness.

In October 2005, Bishop Marcus Lohrmann signed a covenant to begin our companionship with the Slovak Lutheran Church in Serbia.

**Thank you! Danke shoen! Merci beaucoup! Muchos gracias!
Domo arigato! Asante sana! And thank you again!**

How in the world do we ever thank you enough for all of your many kindnesses, cards, gifts, goodies, and well-wishes for us not only during the Holidays, but throughout the year. And that grill...WOW! What FUN that will be this summer! And you are ALL invited to come enjoy it some Sunday afternoon, probably in June. You sneaky little people! We didn't know a thing about it, and my mom never slipped once! It is all so gracious of you, and we appreciate your thoughtfulness. Most especially, we appreciate the ministry we share here at Emanuel with you, our Church Family. May God bless you each and all in the New Year ahead! Consider yourselves hugged!

In His Love,
Pastor & Carol

He is at it again ... or maybe for the first time for real ... Pastor has made a commitment to go on a diet for the coming year. But he needs your help!

A new sign-up sheet will be posted in January on the board near the office asking for pledges per pound of weight loss. Pastor would like his loss to be the Pre-School's and Good Samaritan's funds gain with the donations to be split between them.

He will make a formal announcement at the beginning of each month as to the weight loss. You will only owe according to that poundage taken off. Thank you for your help and encouragement!

Welcome to the 2008 Church Council members!

President **Ted Rohrs**

President-Elect **Jack Robbins**

Secretary **Betsy Mix**

Treasurer **Julie Kohout**

Properties Board

Art Lange, Ron Wiechers

Education Board

Jamie Bostelman, Joleen Brubaker

Doctrine & Worship Board

Susan Landversicht, Tom Jenny

Finance Board

Burnice Agler, Judy Michaelis

Congregational Life Board

Ryan Hoffman, Carol Castello

Thank you to the out-going members for your leadership and service this past year:

Laura Ellis, Darlene Bostelman, Jim Hershberger, Michelle Slee, Ed Peper

Thursday Evening Worship Services

The Doctrine and Worship Board is pleased to announce that Thursday evening services will be expanding in 2008 beginning March 27 and continuing through November 20. The Bible study normally held on Thursday evenings will be incorporated into the service, with an interactive dialogue for the sermon. Communion will be served on the third Thursday of the month. We see this as one more way to meet the needs of our parishioners and hope that you will consider

joining us, either as your weekly attendance or an additional time to praise the Lord.

The Board is seeking volunteers to assist at these services. We are in need of ushers, altar guild members and musicians to help us. Please give this prayerful thought. More information will be forthcoming after the new year. If you have any questions or wish to volunteer, please contact Pastor Castello, Angela Tonjes, Tom Jenny, or Susan Landversicht.

Giving/Donation Corner

THANK YOU to everyone who supported the **Project We Care** donation. Your generosity helped bring eight families a brighter Christmas. This is three more families than last year! What a great way to end such a generous year of giving! (*See related article on next page.*)

We will be beginning the new year by collecting donations for the House of Ruth. This is a shelter located in Defiance that aids battered women and children. Their largest need is hairbrushes. However, they could also use personal hygiene products and paper products.

Shrove Tuesday Supper

Since Easter is early this year, mark your calendars for the Shrove Tuesday Supper which is right around the corner. This year's dinner will be on February 5, 2008. The menu will be the same as in year' past, sausage and pancakes with all the toppings. Hope to see everyone there.

Project: We Care

Because you cared, eight families with a total of 26 children (a total of 42 people!) enjoyed a brighter Christmas through your gifts for them from our “Angel Tree” for “Project: We Care”. Along with fulfilling some “Christmas list wishes”, each family was given groceries to provide a complete holiday meal. Special thanks to all who supported (and funded!) the Shopping day for our K.F.C. (and other!) kids, and thanks to Blake Biederstedt, Meredith Hoops, Laura, Sarah, Carl, and Gayla Yaney and Carol Castello for filling the shopping carts at WalMart. Special thanks to Lauren Hoffman and to Rachel and Nora Castello Dunn for their help with deliveries! For those to whom you have shared God’s love in this simple way, *thank you for your outreach!*

Council Chat - December 17, 2008

Donation Corner for January – House of Ruth in Defiance

Shrove Dinner - February 5, 2008

We will continue to administer Communion at the first and second services on the first and second Sundays of the month. The surveys filled out in 2007 indicated there will be no change.

Confirmation Sunday - April 27, 2008

The 2008 offering envelopes are available for pick up. They are displayed in the overflow area.

Installation of the 2008 council members will be held at both services on Sunday, December 30.

President - Ted Rohrs

Vice President - Jack Robbins

Secretary - Betsy Mix

Treasurer - Julie Kohout

Doctrine and Worship Board - Susan Landversicht and Tom Jenny

Congregational Life Board - Ryan Hoffman and Carol Castello

Board of Education - Jamie Bostelman and Joleen Brubaker

Finance Board - Burnice Agler and Judy Michaelis

Properties Board - Art Lange and Ron Wiechers

Poinsettias

Thank you to all who purchased poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary this Christmas season!

Burnice Agler - in loving memory of husband, Russell

Tiffany Biederstedt - in honor of Blake & Alexandria

Norm & Kathy Bostelman (2) - in loving memory of Harold Bostelman & Otto Hahn; in honor of Lorna Bostelman & Esther Hahn

Harold Delventhal - in loving memory of Mary Delventhal

Jeff & Mary Eickhoff - in loving memory of Norb & Joe Eickhoff

Mr. & Mrs. Julian Gerken (2)

Tom & Barb Hoffman (4) - in loving memory of Art & Estella Hoffman and Robert & Lulu Arps; in honor of Ryan & Andrea Hoffman & Lauren Hoffman

Joe & Julie Kohout (2) - in honor of Erica & Ryan

Ron & Donna Lee Meyers

Rog & Deb Rex

Jack Robbins - (3) - in loving memory of Lester & Wilma Robbins

Orville & Ann Schnitkey (2) - in loving memory of Mary & Bill Schnitkey, Sep & Jim Hoover

Rupert Schweinhagen - in honor of Olivia Schweinhagen

Angela Tonjes - in honor of our 3 amazing boys: Zach, Dylan & Seth

Charlotte Wangrin

Divorce Care

I would like to thank the congregation of Emanuel for your support and help in making the Divorce Care and the Divorce Care for Kids (DC4K) a success this last fall. It was well attended and helped many see how God can ease the pain and lead them to rebuilding their lives. I would especially like to give a heartfelt thank you to those who helped with the daycare. Without you this program would have been very limited in being able to help those who need it most, those with children.

We will be starting a new 13-week session on January 15. If you or someone you know is going through separation or divorce, please consider this program. The first step is the hardest but the most important. To register call 419-337-4776 or Emanuel at 419-592-2616; or you can call me at 419-599-3601. May God continue to bless and guide you in the New Year.

Jack Robbins

Remember our members in nursing homes and assisted living facilities with prayers, cards, visits this Christmas season.

Lutheran Home (1036 S. Perry St., Napoleon)

Ruth M. Eickhoff

Margaret Fahy

Marge Gathman

Irma Overhulse

Alfred "Petey" Ruetz

Alpine Village Assisted Living (1032 S. Perry, Napoleon)

Christine Rath (#412)

Carl Bockelman (#319)

Otterbein Portage Valley (Avalon by Otterbein, 3533 Rivers Edge Dr Rm 106, Perrysburg OH 43551)

Hildegarde Reiser

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Missionaries to Hong Kong - Pastor John & Barbara LeMond
Congregation President - Ted Rohrs
Women of the ELCA President - Nancy Schink
Prayer Chain Co-ordinator - Carol Castello (419-592-0847 or cjcast@earthlink.net)
Worship & Music Coordinator/Organist - Angela Tonjes
Bell Choir Director - Hugh Schink
Asst. Bell Choir Director - Bill Panning
Living Spirit Director - Marv & Julie Mt.Castle, Holly Mohring
Parish Secretary - Patricia Mohring
Sunday School Superintendent -
Altar Guild Chairman - Andrea Hoffman
Good News Preschool Director - Judith Demmel
Custodian - Jack Robbins

Thank you!

- Thank you for allowing me time to address your congregation and present a review of the ministry we are able to do together as the Northwestern Ohio Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Together – we can do much more than we can alone to live God’s mission to the world! Thank you for your partnership in Christ. Thank you so much for your warm welcome. It was such a well planned worship service, with a wonderful stewardship theme. Your music soloists were outstanding! Thanks. -Susan Short
- Thank you to Pastor Castello and the Doctrine & Worship Committee for deciding to have Emanuel take part this year in the Community Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service. It was a beautiful service! -Holly Mohring

Soul Food

every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

Upcoming menus for January include:

January 2 - Country Ribs, Sauerkraut, Mashed Potatoes

January 9 - Lasagna with Bread Sticks

January 16 - Hobo Stew, Corn Bread

January 23 - Macaroni & Cheese, Hot Dogs

January 30 - Tater Tot Casserole

*Please note: All menus subject to change!

As important as the food is the good fellowship that is shared each Wednesday evening at “Soul Food”. And volunteers to help are always welcomed with these weekly meals; just check out the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board by the church office. Celebrations of birthdays and anniversaries are always welcome, too; please feel free to bring a cake to recognize your special occasions at any time. “Soul Food” is for everyone, so come and enjoy a weekly supper that’s good for you, body and soul!

Membership News

Baptism We were pleased to witness the baptism of **Ava Lauren**, daughter of Joe & Trisha Good on December 9th. Ava's sponsors are Kevin & Kelli Good.

On December 30 **Kamden Benjamin**, son of Ben & Rachael DeWit, will be brought to Jesus in Holy Baptism. Kamden's sponsors are Laura Neuenschwander & Andy Rose.

Funerals The funeral of **Jim Sosebee**, who died November 26, was held on November 29 at Emanuel. **Miriam Smith** died on November 29; her funeral was held on December 1.

On December 15 **Mary Thompson** passed away. Her funeral was held on December 21. We extend our Christian love and sympathy to their families. Please remember them in your prayers.

Weddings On December 8 Pastor Castello officiated at the wedding of his friends, Dennis L. Cool and Jean A. Blumenstock.

Please let us know of any family birth announcements, etc. so we can celebrate with you!

News from around the Synod and the Community

Bloodmobile Dates

Monday, January 7 - St. John UCC, Holgate, 12:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 12 - Napoleon Moose lodge, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Tuesday, January 15 - Lions Club @ Immaculate Conception Church Deshler, 1 - 7 p.m.

Tuesday, January 15 - Napoleon Curves, 2 - 7 p.m. (appointment only)

Monday, January 21 - Henry County Hospital, 7 a.m. - 1 p.m. (appointment only)

Wednesday, January 23 - Phipps Memorial @ Napoleon Moose Lodge, 12 - 6 p.m.

Thursday, January 24 - Double Red Mini-Blood Drive at Henry Co ARC (appointment only)

Bible Study & Weight Loss Program

First Place Bible Study & weight loss program will begin a new session on January 7. This weekly faith-based weight loss plan can help you achieve healthy eating habits and keep your weight under control. One of the best things about the program is the Bible study which will lead you to a closer relationship with God. **First Place** is a Christ-centered health program for women and men of any denomination. The meetings are held at St. Stephen Lutheran Church in Hamler on Monday nights at 7:00 p.m. Call Louise Baden at 419-274-2882 if you are interested.

Statistics

Date	Attendance	Communed	Offerings
November 25	141 + 150 (291)		\$ 3,945.77 Bldg Fd - \$40 World Hngr - \$20
December 2	137 + 83 (220)	132	\$ 6,454.30 Bldg Fd - \$1,115 *Bldg Fd mem - \$10 World Hngr - \$21 Good Sam Fd - \$140
December 9	98 + 96 (194)	70	\$ 3,957.75 Bldg Fd - \$90 *Bldg Fd mem - \$25 World Hngr - \$5 Good Sam Fd - \$85
December 12		4	
December 16 <i>Services canceled due to bad weather</i>			

* memorials:

12/2 \$5 Jim Sosebee; \$5 Miriam Smith

12/9 \$25 Jim Sosebee

Worship participants in January

Ushers

8:00 Lenny Sonnenberg, Ron Dachenhaus

Art Lange, Tom Hoffman

10:30 Alan Storch, Joe Kohout,

Shelley Higbea

Lay assistants

8:00 Laura Ellis

10:30 TBA

Altar Guild

Sheila Sosebee & Jeannie Wiechers

Acolytes

8:00 Nick Rohrs & Nathan Rohrs

10:30 Tyler Nation & Justin Allison

Altar Flowers

January 6 - OPEN

January 13 - Virginia Dillon in loving memory of Bud

January 20 - Ken & Nancy Lange for their 50th wedding anniversary

- Alison Storch's 15th birthday

- in loving memory of Ray Landversicht

January 27 - OPEN

Open dates on 2008 calendar:

February 10, 17

June 22, 29

October 5, 12

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

July 20, 27

November 2, 16, 23

April 6

August 3

December 21

May 11, 18, 25

September 28

Altar flowers cost \$20. This amount should be placed in the offering plate and designated for altar flowers. Flowers are automatically ordered from Cattails. If you have a special flower, color or container request, Cattails can customize your arrangement. Price of the arrangement can be increased also. If you wish to make your own arrangements, you should notify the church office a couple weeks ahead of the designated Sunday.