

Greetings Saints of Emmanuel:

There it was, a Time magazine special edition — “Jesus” — staring at me as I was in the checkout line with the kids at the grocery store.

I, perhaps, have purchased a Time only one other time, but, professionally, I had to wonder just what this magazine was trying to tell the world about Jesus. So to the cashier it went.

I’m only a few pieces in so far. I was pleased with Richard Jerome’s The Life of Jesus piece, who writes a few page summary of Jesus just from the gospels. It was fair, nothing egregiously wrong. So, at the least, people will get a real picture of Jesus from this piece.

But that doesn’t seem to be the overall trajectory of the magazine. It begins with David Van Biema, who puts forward something to the effect of “curiosity” as the chief virtue. The point seems, as is usually the case, to bring into question the Christian answer to the question Who is Jesus? and to extend the source material beyond the gospels & New Testament to any accounts of Jesus. Christians have been among the curious people in history and were, until (perhaps) only recently, the greatest scientists with the greatest scientific discoveries.

You can almost hear the derision when he writes, “As Christianity combed itself out in the second and third centuries, it drew much brighter lines about which of its contending stories were canonical (our 27 New testament books), which were noncanonical but at least edifying, and which—according to the people who ended up making the rules—were heresy.”

This is a classic claim, and it’s the claim that the books we regard as authentic (the 27 NT books) were decided arbitrarily much later to be authentic. That, “actually,” all the available books carried pretty much the same authority until someone decided it shouldn’t be that way. (This isn’t true.)

What folks like David seem to never consider is that anyone would divide a pile of religious-historical accounts into those which are reliable and those which are heretical. Of course some accounts are unreliable, untrue, and heresy. (And to prove it — just think politics and the news. It’s almost guaranteed that you’re going to believe that someone’s account is untrue, that some news organization is false.) So we can take for granted that some accounts, such as the Gospel of Thomas, are obviously false and untrue.

The fact that we have even four accounts that record historical events is unparalleled. What we contend, as Christians, is that the four accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John — along with the rest of the NT — are true. That the gospels do tell us who Jesus is.

More on Time magazine next time-until then, see below for our upcoming events and announcements this week.

In Christ our Lord,
+ Pastor Justin Baker

Today, Wednesday, January 14th

11:00AM: Prayer Group

Prayer group will meet on Zoom throughout the winter.

Newsorthy

Pastor Out of Office | January 12 - 24

Pastor Justin is out of the office traveling & visiting family. You can reach out to the office for his cell phone to call him for any reason.

Christianity on Book | January 31, 1PM, The Bakers

We will have our first "Christianity on Book" discussion on January 31st at the Bakers' house. We will be discussing "Live Not By Lies" by Rod Dreher, which you can order [here](#). The church also has a limited number of copies available for \$12 a copy, so please let the office know if you would like one of those! Please order the book now so that you can read it prior to our discussion. Whether or not you've been a part of the Live Not By Lies Sunday school, this will be a rich discussion and a great opportunity to continue wrestling with the content. Please plan to join us then!

Financial Statements

2025 financial statements will be available in the Narthex for the next two weeks, so please plan to pick them up then! Any that are left after the two week period will be mailed to you.

Upcoming ELCW Event

On February 3rd at 10am, the ELC Women will meet for breakfast in Luther Hall and a presentation by Nella Baker. See the flyer at the end of the eNews for more information!

Please Read: Worship Volunteers

Volunteer scheduling for worship services is now coordinated by the church office. **Please note that the February schedule has been updated and the dates you're serving may have changed.**

If you receive the scheduling emails, please reply to let the office know you've seen them and that you're available on the days scheduled!

To see the January schedule, click [here](#).

To see the **updated** February schedule, click [here](#).

United Together, We Pray

Prayers for Mission Workers

For the Omars and their ministry among Muslims in the Atlanta region; for the Thorstads in their work in Laos & Thailand; and for Dure Negassa and the Rev. Gemachu in their ministry in Kenya among the Oromos.

Prayers for those in need of Intercession:

George and Donna Campagna, Linda Casper, May Hill, Jim Troxell, David Weihe, Vince Berardinelli, Gayle Wertz, June Ugen, Cassandra, Nojia, John, Kevin, Jim, Frances, Julie and family, Trudy, Linda, Frances and family, Peggy, Brylee, Sandra, Zachary, Kevin, David, Kathy, Asa, Jerry, Jack, Al & family, Beth, Colleen, Rachael, Leila, Darin, Les & Cathy, Tony, Sarah, and Harry

Prayers of Bereavement

Most Blessed and Holy God, we implore you to remember *the family of Debbie Pritts, the family of Harry Yothers, and the family of Mark*. Fill all families who mourn with the strength to grieve, the comfort of your presence, and faith unto life everlasting.

Prayer for this Church

We pray that you will fill this congregation with the faith that endures unto life eternal. We pray that you make us one people united in prayer. We pray that you will send families, children, widows & widowers, the elderly, and any others into our midst, that they may also be filled with faith, encourage this congregation, and bring honor and glory and praise to your name.

Worship

From Sunday's Sermon

We have confidence that when we confess, our sins are forgiven, because Jesus has made it so. He humbled himself to enter the waters of our sin, that through his body and blood, we are cleansed from sin.

But similarly, we should take warning, that when we do not confess our sins, that when we hold onto our sins as idols, they may take hold of us, they may try to destroy our faith, they may try to sever our membership to the Family of God.

Let us not fall into this temptation.

Watch this past Sunday's sermon [here](#) or read it [here](#).

Discipleship

Sunday School, 9AM

January 18: We will meet to discuss Live Not By Lies one final time on Sunday, January 18th. If you just can't get enough, please join us for our Christianity on Book discussion on January 31st!

Starting February: Beginning on February 1st, we will begin a series titled "The Gospel Twisted: The Heresies of Our Day." Please plan to join us!

January 25 Fellowship Hour: Bible Trivia!

Bible Study on the Book of Daniel | Resumes [January 26th](#)

More This Week

January 14th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

11:00AM: Prayer Group (Zoom)

6:00PM: Steps and Stories

January 15th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

7:00PM: Boy Scouts

7:30PM: Al-Anon

January 16th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

6:00PM: Girl Scouts

January 17th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

January 18th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

9:00AM: Sunday School (Live Not By Lies)

10:15AM: Worship on the Second Sunday After Epiphany

January 19th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

2:00PM: Quilting

6:30PM: Start the Week

January 20th

Pastor Out-Of-Office

9AM: Bell Choir Rehearsal

10AM: Bell Choir Subset

5:30PM: Champion Cheerleading

7PM: Troop 208 Leaders

January 21st

Pastor Out-Of-Office

6PM: Steps and Stories

Upcoming Birthdays & Anniversaries

January Birthdays:

1/14 Irv Pritts

1/17 Mary Ann Sinwell

1/19 Mary Lou McDonald

1/25 Amanda Wertz

1/28 Carol Wilson

January Anniversaries:

1/24 Ed & Dorothy Datasch (50 years)

February Birthdays:

2/06 Lisa Pepka

2/09 Joe Ugen

2/10 Dana Visnic Ford

2/11 Jeff Pelusi

2/17 Jordan Pelusi

2/21 Peggy Lewis

2/25 Stephen Cehovin

February Anniversaries:

2/09 Mark & Alma Heyl (44 years)

Photo Gallery on Our Website!

We've added a photo gallery to our website to make pictures easier to access and view (and to make the newsletter clearer). Contact the office to add pictures of events to the gallery! (We will feature fewer photos in the newsletters so that we can include more on the website.) View the website photos [here](#).

Emmanuel Lutheran Church Women

Tuesday Morning

February 3, 2026

Luther Hall

10:00 AM Breakfast

&

Nella Baker presenting

“The CODA Life:

Growing Up in a Deaf Family”



Devotions: Danette Hunter

Hostesses: Karen Kuczek
Peggy Lewis

Program Rep.: Julie Schamber

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