

## Greetings Saints of Emmanuel!

It will be good to see you all Sunday.

It has been cold--perhaps in more ways than one.

When I finally got the driveway cleared at dusk on Monday, I was reminded (as I went to get some much belated donuts) that I hadn't been cooped up in the house since early Covid. You could see there was a bit of spark in everyone at the store who had gotten out. It was just good to see people and share snow-cooped stories.

But being cooped up, of course, is not the only similarity to covid we find ourselves in: the country again begins to seem tense, divided, and disinterested in truth.

Political parties and politicians are fanning the flames of rhetoric to new, disastrous heights. This sort of thing inevitably finds its way into the church. The name of Jesus begins to be used, by Christians and non-Christians alike, to justify *this* or *that* side. It's important to remember that *taking the Lord's name in vain* is exactly about this--using God's name to *wrongly justify something*.

Murder is always wrong. Death is always bad. These things we know with confidence because of Scripture. We can confidently decry such things.

But immigration policy and enforcement -- saying *nothing* here of any of the events that have transpired -- is something about which there is real disagreement. This is something that must be decided in the public square, legislated by the legislature, and judged by courts. The public has, of course, every right to use freedoms of speech and assembly to make known their approval or disapproval of such actions.

The news networks and social media both *greatly benefit* from viral and vitriolic rhetoric, because more views and more clicks = more ad dollars, and more ad dollars mean better business.

It's easy to get caught up in the viral frenzy.

Instead, what I'd urge and encourage you is *avoid hyperbole* and *avoid rhetoric* that you don't really believe. If you do believe it, go for it. If you don't, tone down your rhetoric until it's something that you do believe.

Finally, remember that our tribe is first and foremost the Church. *We* are the Church, those who have pledged love for God *and* for one another *for eternity*. We have pledged to love those *Christians* especially whom we *would not* have loved before becoming Christians. It will do us no good to be dismissive of *practicing* Christians or the Church in this life.

What will Jesus say to any of us who do this?

In Christ our Lord,  
+ Pastor Justin Baker

### Today, Wednesday, January 28th

11:00AM, Prayer Group, Zoom

Since it is the fourth Wednesday of the month, prayer group will meet on Zoom to pray for our congregation and our world. Please plan to join us then!

## Newsorthy

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### **Brookdale Worship | Friday, January 30, 11:15AM**

Join us for worship at Brookdale!

### **Christianity in Print | Saturday, January 31, 1PM, The Bakers**

We will have our first "Christianity in Print" discussion this Saturday, January 31st, at the Bakers' home. We will be discussing "Live Not By Lies" by Rod Dreher, which you can order [here](#). The office also has a limited number of books available for \$12 each. Please reach out if you would like to purchase one! Either way, please read the book before the meeting on January 31st. 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.

### **Funeral for Linda Sydeski | Thursday, January 29**

Linda Sydeski, a friend of Linda Casper's and a visitor of Emmanuel, passed away last Friday. Pastor Justin will be officiating her funeral on Thursday at 10am at Paul E. Bekavac Funeral Home. As a result, Pastor Justin will be out of office all day on Thursday. You can see her obituary and visitation arrangements [here](#).

### **ELCW Breakfast | February 3rd, 10AM**

On February 3rd at 10am, the ELC Women will be meeting in Luther Hall for breakfast and a presentation by Nella Baker. All women are invited to join! More information is available at the end of the eNews.

### **Prayer for Families | February 4th, 11AM**

Next Wednesday is the first Wednesday of February, meaning we will meet at 11am to pray for the our families and the families of our congregation and world. Please join us then, and then stick around for...

### **Game Day | February 4th, Noon**

The Fellowship and Evangelism team will be hosting a game day on Wednesday, February 4th starting at noon in the Luther Hall. See the flyer [here](#) and at the end of the eNews for more information! A sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex.

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### **Please Read: Worship Volunteers**

All volunteers have been emailed the schedules for January, February and March. If you did not receive those emails, please let the office know! Schedules are also posted in the sacristy, the library, and the Narthex.

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

To see the updated March 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:*

Danette Hunter, Linda Casper, May Hill, Jim Troxell, David Weihe, Vince Berardinelli, Gayle Wertz, June Ugen, Cassandra, Nojia, John, Kevin, Jim, Frances, Julie and family, Trudy, Frances and family, 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 & Linda*. 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.*

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## Worship

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### **Brookdale Service | Friday, January 30, 11:15AM**

Join us for worship at Brookdale *this* Friday!

#### **From Sunday's Sermon**

"Everything about this first sign is about what Jesus has come to accomplish — give up his own body and blood on the cross, so that we may partake of his own body and blood and live forevermore.

So, then, let us be strengthened in faith by what our Lord has done at the Wedding in Cana, knowing that we can trust in every promise he has given us. And let us look forward to next week when we can again partake of the heavenly body and blood of our Lord Jesus together."

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

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## Discipleship

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### **Sunday School, 9AM**

**Starting This Sunday:** we will begin a series titled "The Gospel Twisted: The Heresies of Our Day." Please plan to join us!

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#### **Bible Study on the Book of Daniel | Resumes This Monday**

Our Bible Study on Daniel will resume this coming Monday, February 2nd, at 1pm and 6:30pm. Please join us then and bring a friend!

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## Stewardship

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Please reach out to the church office if there are any projects around your home that other church members could assist you with!

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## Fellowship and Evangelism

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### Shrove Tuesday Potluck | February 17th

We will be holding a Shrove Tuesday potluck on February 17th at 6pm! See more information [here](#) and in the flyer at the end of the eNews. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex.

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### More This Week

#### January 28th

**11AM: Prayer Group (Zoom)**

6PM: Steps and Stories

#### January 29th

7PM: Boy Scouts

7:30PM: Al-Anon

#### January 30th

**11:15AM: Brookdale Worship Service**

5:30PM: Girl Scouts

#### January 31st

**1PM: Christianity in Print (the Bakers')**

#### February 1st

**9AM Sunday School (The Gospel Twisted)**

**10:15AM Worship on the Fourth Sunday After Epiphany**

#### February 2nd

**1PM: Daniel Bible Study**

**2PM: Quilting**

**6:30PM: Daniel Bible Study**

6:30PM: Start the Week

#### February 3rd

**9AM: Bell Choir**

**10AM: Staff Meeting**

**10AM: ELCW Breakfast**

5:30PM: Champion Cheerleading

#### February 4th

**11AM: Prayer for Families**

**12PM: Game Day**

**4PM: Council Retreat (the Bakers')**

### Upcoming Birthdays & Anniversaries

#### **January Birthdays:**

1/28 Carol Wilson

#### **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)

2/28 Jim & Peggy Lewis (65 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

# Game Day

Wednesday, February 4, 2025  
Starting at Noon



Bring a snack or appetizer to share.

Skip lunch at home and enjoy munching together.

We will be playing cards and favorite games.

Try your hand at Uno, Hand & Foot, Pinochle, Mexican Train and more.

Don't worry if you have never played before, we have directions.

Or you can bring your favorite game to add to the fun.

## Shrove Tuesday Potluck



Plans are being made for a Shrove Tuesday Potluck to be held on **Tuesday, February 17, at 6 PM.** With Ash Wednesday the following day, Shrove Tuesday is meant to serve as the final day of celebration and feasting before the beginning of Lent.

Your Fellowship and Evangelism Ministry Team encourages you to plan to attend and enjoy some great food and wonderful fellowship! Please sign up on the narthex bulletin board indicating the number attending and whether you will bring a main dish, salad, side dish, or dessert.

[Download the Bulletin](#)

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