

VOICE OF EMMANUEL

SEEDS OF HOPE!



North Carolina Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Lutherans have always loved a good paradox. In a world that would seduce us into either/or camps—us vs. them—we’ve always known that we are saint AND sinner, already AND not yet, justice AND mercy, law AND Gospel people. I get that there are times when we must indeed choose, perhaps in the political realm and especially from a military perspective. Still, false dichotomies drive a wedge into God’s greatest gift of relationship. Fundamentalism is the weapon of choice in these extreme dichotomies. History shows us over and over that with fundamentalism’s absolutes, in order for me to be right, you must be wrong. In order for me to be saved, you must be damned. Ultimately, in order for me to live, you must die. This is where, once again, we find ourselves in the ancient conflict between Israelis and Palestinians manifesting this time around in the Israel-Hamas war.

The brazen and brutally ruthless recent sneak attack on innocent Israeli and other citizens by Hamas is unthinkable, unacceptable, and we appropriately denounce it thoroughly. That much most people in the international community, including many, if not most, Palestinians, seem to agree on. One could hardly expect no retaliation for such atrocity. But anything beyond these statements hinting at not just pulling drowning folks out of the river but going upstream to see if you can help them from falling in evokes visceral reactions from religious as well as political pundits. We have received more negative communication than ever before over what our ELCA presiding bishop said early on about this conflict. The most common accusation tying all those contacts together is one word: antisemitic. Lutherans are antisemitic, folks said, for even hinting that there might have been any systemic persecution or abuse of the Palestinians that—while not excusing the actions of Hamas (nothing could)—might explain some of the realities contributing to desperate measures by victims of Israeli settlements, occupation, walls, sanctions, etc. In other words, in a world that in grief, fear, and anger seems bent on choosing “We stand with Israel” or “We support the Palestinians,” we dare to consider *both/and* in terms of support and *neither/nor* in terms of Zionist or jihadist platforms.

Israel maintains, not incorrectly, that Hamas is a terrorist group, that Hamas is, even so, the official government of Gaza, that Hamas hides in tunnels under hospitals and refugee camps thereby putting fellow innocent Palestinians in danger, and so on. So complicated. So tragic. This is where I think—perhaps strangely at first glance—of Eve, the mother of Cain and Abel, near the very beginning of scripture’s narrative about the challenge of human interaction and relationship. Abel’s offering was pleasing to God, but Cain’s wasn’t, so Cain killed his brother Abel. Aren’t you just certain that while Eve grieved her murdered son, she also grieved her murderer son who was then banished? And that the Father of the so-called Prodigal Son grieved not only his wayward and squandering son but also his self-righteous son who refused to celebrate? My point is that life and relationships are complicated. Like the social media meme simply yet poignantly states, it’s entirely possible to be heartbroken for more than one group embroiled in brokenness and conflict. While consequences are real and unavoidable, humanly speaking, we long for and cling to the ultimate promise of reconciliation.

I’m surely no expert on this conflict in the Holy Land that is thousands of years old. But in 1990 I read a book that helped open up my understanding of that conflict from the point of view of the Palestinians. The book was called *Blood Brothers* by Elias Chacour. He spoke to the NC Synod group on our 2018 trip to the Holy Land, along with Mitri Raheb and



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Voice of Emmanuel Seeds of Hope!

ELC Seeds of Hope

is published weekly to
keep members and
friends together during
there time of physical
distancing!

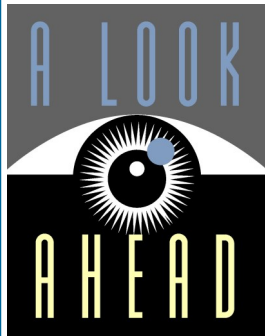
**Information
submitted for
publication must
be received by
Tuesday of Each
week.**

**e-mail to
lifewithemmanuel
@gmail.com**

Mission Statement:

As the body of Christ,
fed and nourished
through worship, we
are called to serve all
people, through the use
of our gifts to proclaim
God’s justice, mercy
and love.

*Our Vision: Striving to
Thrive with Vitality!*



January 7

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus and the Ephesians, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.



Shirley Barnes, Polly Bryant, Kathy Cromer, Laura Cromer, James Gantt, Suzette James, Glenn Mosteller, Trudy Perkins, Jim Sain, Paula Turner, Joan Warren, Rick Norine and family (cousin of Barbara O'Neill), Evelyn Cochrane (neighbor of Susan McConnell), Drew Milholland (Pastor Mike), Jane Smith (mother of Kathy Cromer), April Wellman (Susan Boyd), Rosa Guerra (Susan Boyd), Rob Gregor (Susan Boyd), Anita Cable (mother in law Ashley Peaslee), Charles Ferguson (son-in-law Judy Blanc), Bill Gibbs Jr. (Amy Brown), Ken Smith (brother of Kathy Cromer), J.L. Morris (Susan Boyd), Jay Puckett (Carol Wise), David Richter (Barbara O'Neill), Lenard McIlveen (brother of Marianne Doehling), Vinnie Viscarello (son-in-law Dot Swart), Quaid Mincey (Jennifer Huskey)

Farewell to Pastor Leonard and Rita Bolick

On Sunday January 7, 2024, as part of worship, we will have a ritual of Farewell and Godspeed for Pastor Leonard and Rita Bolick for the celebration and closure of their ministry at Emmanuel. **A covered dish luncheon** will follow after the worship service to honor their time with us. There are sheets on the podium in the North Wing to indicate what food item you can bring. Please attend whether you can bring food or not.

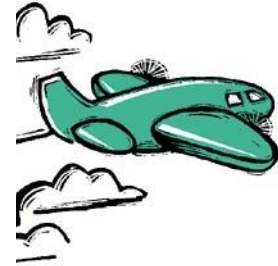


To show our appreciation to Pastor Leonard and Rita for being with us and leading us during this interim period between Called Pastors, the Council would like to give the Congregation the opportunity to give to a "love offering". The love offering will be presented to them at the luncheon along with a card with a list of all who donated. You may use an envelope in the pew and write **"Pastor's love offering"** on it, mail your contribution, or take it by the church office.





At Sunday school, the younger children were drawing pictures illustrating Biblical stories. The teacher walked by and noticed one little boy was drawing an airplane! "Oh, what Bible story are you drawing?" she asked. "This is the Flight into Egypt," the little boy answered. "See, here is Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. And this," he said, pointing to the front of the plane, "is Pontius. He's the Pilot."



?? ? Bible Quiz ? ??

Where did Paul meet Timothy for the first time?

1. Corinth
2. Ephesus
3. Lystra
4. Philippi
5. Sardis



Answer: 3 - Acts 16:1-5

*We offer our Christian Sympathy to the family of
Nan Muddle*

She passed away December 15, 2023.

*Please continue to lift the rest of the family up in prayer during
their time of loss. May God's comfort surround them and the
hope of resurrection brings joy to us all.*

Current address: 48 Buccaneer Drive, Leesburg Fl 34788

Ministry in Action - January

	January 7	January 14	January 21	January 27
Greeters	Ben Robinson Emily Robinson	Dara Jarrett Susan Boyd	David Bynum Johnnie Bynum	Kenneth Pales Nancy Pales
Lector	John Cromer	Chuck Yoder	David Bynum	Elizabeth Cloninger
Communion Asst.	Vera Lanier	John Cromer	Randy Zimtbbaum	Ruth Murphy
Acolyte	Hannah Brooks	Jennifer Little	Jennifer Little	Hannah Brooks
Crucifer	Jennifer Huskey	Matthew Heavner	Joe Rhyne	Paul Gamiel
Altar Flowers	Little	Available	Lounsbury	Available

Monthly Duties January 2024

Councilperson	Jennifer Huskey			
Altar Guild	Elaine Harmon	Doris Little		
Ushers	Steve Lounsbury (Captain)	David Bynum Glenn Mosteller	Ben Robinson Guy Rudisill	

Acts 19:1-7

¹While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ²He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³Then he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—
⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.



Faith5 Corner by Bob Lake

First Sunday of Christmas

Share: Share your highs and lows

Read: Acts 19:1-7

Talk: Slowly reflect on the reading. Why do you think that Luke included this short passage in the Book of Acts? Was it to show that Paul believed that John the Baptist's baptism was not sufficient? Recall Luke 3:16, where John the Baptizer proclaimed Jesus. Luke wrote: "John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'" Do you think that Paul was talking to believers who had repented? Is repentance about the past? Do you think that baptism in the Holy Spirit is about things to come? That Jesus is the Christ? We still use water to baptize. Does the sacrament of baptism commit us to accepting the Holy Spirit and our future with Christ?

Pray: Thank you, Holy Spirit for filling our hearts with the hope of Jesus' resurrection and the hope for our future.

Bless: "_____, you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit"



Every night in every home



highs and lows



a Bible verse or story



about how the Bible
reading might relate to
your highs and lows



for one another's highs
and lows



one another

www.faith5.org





*Sunday, January 7, 2024
As part of worship we will have a
Farewell and Godspeed for
Pastor Leonard and Rita for the closure
of their ministry. A covered dish
luncheon will follow after the worship
service to celebrate their time with us*

H
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Y

*All Council and Committee
Reports are due to the office by
January 15th from the
2023 Council and Committee
members*



Council Reports

N
E
W



*Installation of the 2024 Council
Members and Officers of the
Congregation will take place during
Worship on
January 21, 2024*

Y
E
A
R

*Quilting will resume Tuesday, January 16, 2024
at 9 am in the Fellowship hall. We welcome
anyone who would like to help with this
ministry - sewing skills appreciated but not
required. If you are not able to join us, we
always need fabric donations - cotton and/or
washable, non-stretchy material. - bolts and
pieces. Thanks in advance.*

Susan, Phyllis and Carole



others. They are Palestinian Christians, and Raheb is a Lutheran pastor. **Augusta Victoria Hospital** is our Lutheran World Federation hospital serving Palestinians in the Holy Land and funded, in part, by the U.S. Government. Whatever else I might say here, I need to assure you that not all Palestinians, not even most Palestinians, are terrorists. Likewise, as evidenced by increasing protests among Israelis prior to this current war, not all Israelis agree with the settlements and occupation of Palestine. And neither does international law that established both the nation of Israel and the Palestinian territories in 1948.

Finally, I want to remind those who seem seamlessly to equate the current political state of Israel with the “biblical Israel.” Given that the Bible is a library, a collection, of books about God’s people, scripture itself clearly indicates that “Israel” geographically is always in flux. For most of its history Jews and Canaanites (read Palestinians) lived, worked, played, and even fought, side by side in this geographical crossroads of the ancient world that necessarily had to be traversed for any commerce, travel, or conflict between wealthy and powerful Egypt to the south and the rising and falling powers of Assyria, Babylon, and Persia to the north and east. The conquest kingdom of King David was the zenith of Israel’s geographic expansion and control, in roughly 1000 BCE, and that was only a brief blip in Israel’s long history. By the end of his son Solomon’s reign—so much for wisdom—the temple in Jerusalem had finally been built alright, with conscripted (slave) labor, and the kingdom United was split into the nations of Israel to the north (10 tribes) called Israel, and the nation of Judah to the south (tribes of Benjamin, Judah, and Levi). Jerusalem was actually part of Judah, to the south. These nations of Israel and Judah, both of whom worshiped Yahweh and followed the law of Moses, fought one another from time to time and despised each other over who worshiped correctly and who was more pure in Mosaic law. Hundreds of years of “biblical Israel” involved sojourn or exile in the foreign lands of Egypt and Babylon.

Like Hawkeye reminded Father Mulcahy during a MASH episode, war is worse than hell. When Fr. Mulcahy asked why, Hawkeye asked, “Who goes to hell?” “The wicked,” said the priest. Hawkeye went on to explain that in war that’s not how it is. The innocent suffer the most, not the wicked, at the whims of the relatively few powerful in government, military, and economic terms. For the life of me, as horrific as it is to fathom what Hamas did and is doing, it doesn’t seem that killing and destroying and displacing and annihilating tens if not hundreds of thousands more innocent people will somehow bring an end to this conflict. More violence will beget more violence, history has taught us. I, therefore, join the voices calling and praying for a ceasefire and an upcoming Advent-renewed focus on the Jew who comes among us as the one who will fulfill the ancient prophecies of our swords beat into ploughshares and our spears into pruning hooks for all nations, the Prince of Peace who taught us, “You have heard it said, an eye for an eye, but I say to you, ‘Love your enemies...’”
Lord, have mercy.

Walking with you,



NC Synod Bishop





EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
216 S Aspen St Lincoln, NC 28092

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY Birthdays

Paula Turner	01/01
Scott Doehling	01/05
Stan Goodson	01/07
Annette Stone	01/08
Melissa Scronce	01/10
Jill Eaddy	01/11
Michael Wise	01/11
Amanda Pierce	01/12
Dieter Strohacker	01/13
Patti Hance	01/15
Marty Shuford	01/15
Daniel Rhodes	01/16
Shannon Bridges	01/18
David Byrd	01/18
Kae Wright	01/19
Alfred Yoder	01/19
Alison Zimbaum	01/22
Shirley Barnes	01/24
J.R. Little	01/24
Langley Little	01/24
Perry Propst	01/27
Owynn Cornwell	01/28
Carol Meadows	01/28
John Cloninger III	01/30
Marilyn Brooks	01/31
Cherie Derr	01/31



Emmanuel's Free Little Pantry

Personal Care Items Needed:
Socks (ladies and men's)

Food Items Needed

Pop-Top cans of:
Beanie Weenies, Green Beans, Corn, Potted Meat, Vienna Sausages
Pop Tarts, Crackers, breakfast bars, etc.

Thank you for helping fill the Pantry for our community



PSALM 146:2, NIV



Seeds of Hope

A PUBLICATION OF
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*Newsletter Content
Contributors
Bob Lake
Ben Robinson
WELCA
North Carolina Synod*

Sunday worship, study and
fellowship opportunities

Traditional Worship Service
10:00 am in the Sanctuary

Service is live streamed on
Facebook at 10 am each Sunday
and will be posted to YouTube.